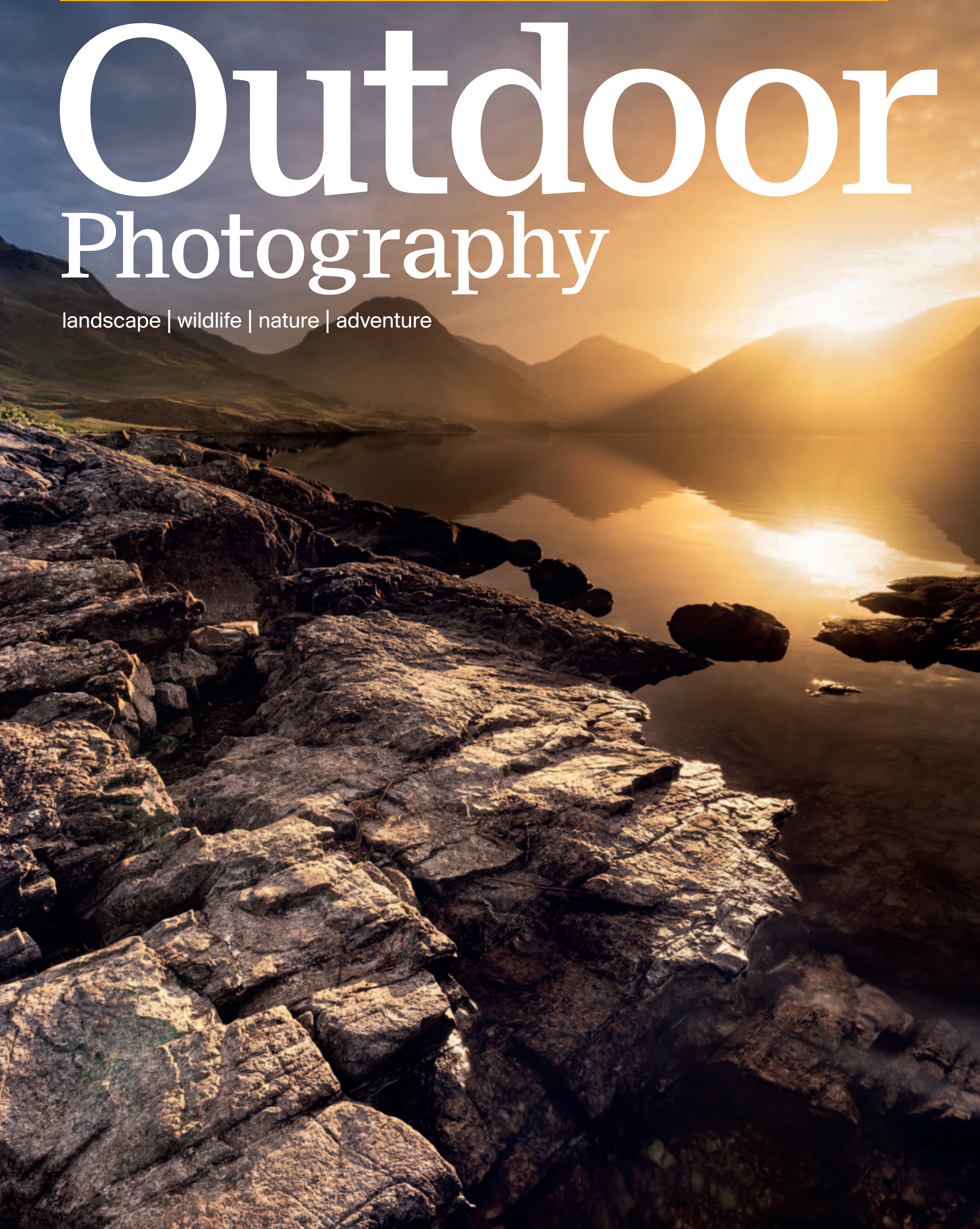
NICK BRANDT + RE-IMAGINE AUTUMN + CLIMATE CHANGE SPECIAL

Outdoor Photography

landscape | wildlife | nature | adventure



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Fragile beauty

Of all the arts, photography is uniquely placed to communicate the impact of climate change on our world. So, as global leaders meet in Glasgow in November to make vital decisions on how to protect our planet, this month's *OP* highlights some of the powerful work created by contemporary photographers showing the gravity of the situation.

Threaded through this issue are pictures and articles by a range of photographers capturing just a few of the many consequences of climate change. These are pictures showing the threat to wildlife, humans and the landscape. They stir the heart and mind.

But important as these issues are, we are also here to inspire and enthral. So don't miss the wonderful pictures of Stuart McGlennon (page 10), Ann and Steve Toon's brilliant ideas for photographing autumn (page 32) and a fabulous collection of sweeping landscapes (page 86). We also introduce a new series looking at great places to photograph in different regions of the country – starting with the Outer Hebrides (page 46).

We at *OP* love to show photographs celebrating the beauty of nature. This month we have fabulous pictures of everything from Mongolian horses to magnificent pictures of the Lake District. We also have resonant photographs showing just how fragile that beauty can be.

Enjoy the issue.

Mark Bentley

ON THE COVER
Picture by Stuart McGlennon.
See interview on page 10.

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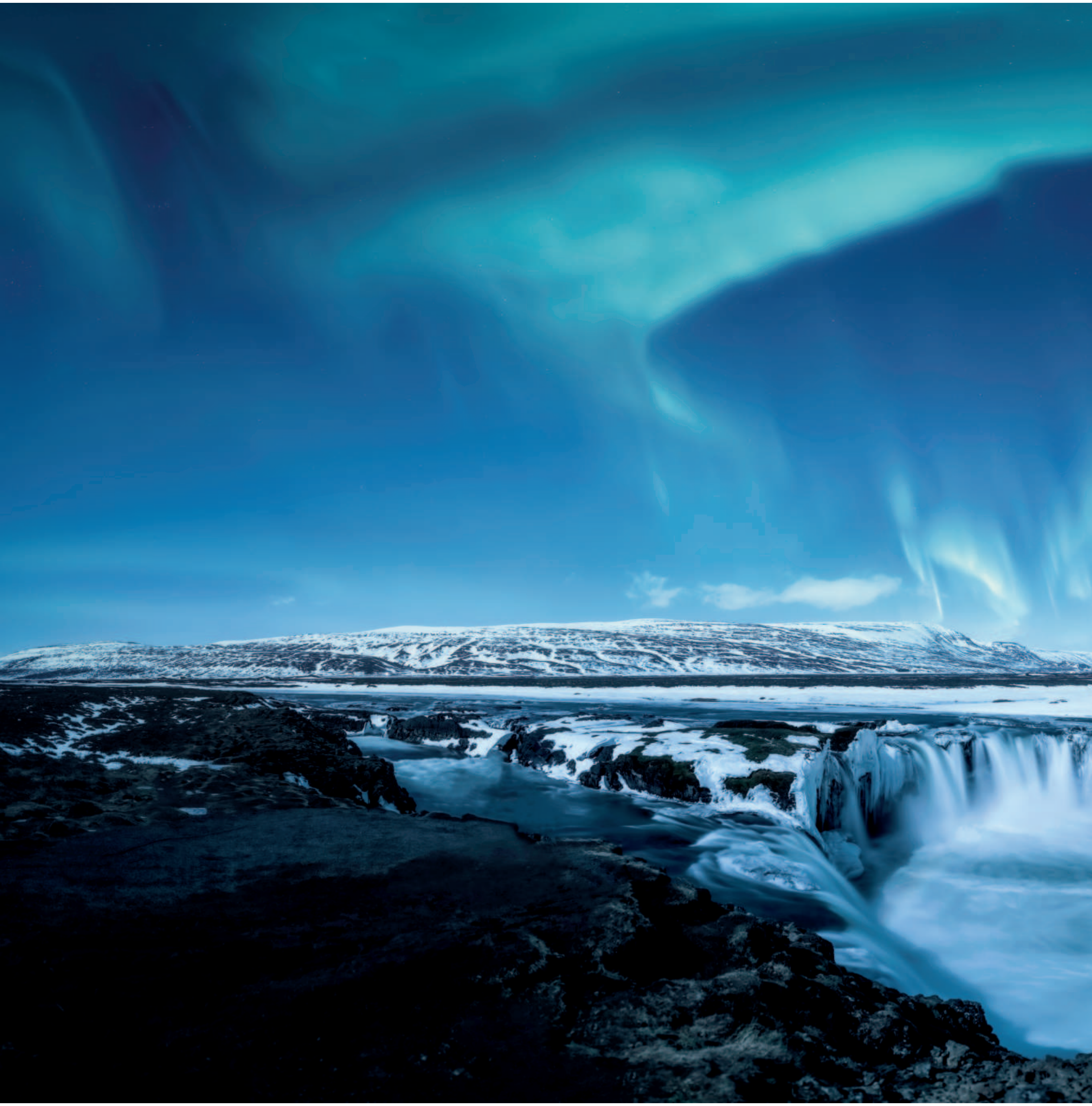


Goðafoss Flow by Larryn Rae

The winners of Astronomy Photographer of the Year 13 have been announced, and they include this spectacular image which was highly commended in the Aurorae category. It shows the winter aurora at one of the most recognisable waterfalls in Iceland – the mighty Goðafoss. Conditions were calm and clear, the temperature was around -10°C and a full moon lit the scene – this made exposing the image much easier. The beautiful hues of the moon, the semi-frozen waterfall and the beams of light across the sky made this night unforgettable for the photographer.

You can see all the winners in an exhibition at the National Maritime Museum, London, until August 2022. For more details turn to page 9.

© Larryn Rae

NEWSROOM

CONSERVATION NEW LAUNCHES COMPETITIONS OUTDOORS TECHNOLOGY OTHER NEWS

Fujifilm GFX50S II breaks cover

Fujifilm has announced the GFX50S II, a compact and lightweight body that builds on its predecessor's design, while adding standout features from the recent GFX100S. Pixel count is unchanged from the original, with a 51.4MP sensor measuring 1.7x bigger than 35mm format and promising superb resolving power, wide dynamic range and a high signal-to-noise ratio.

Newly added to that is an upgraded X Processor 4 engine, which uses Fujifilm's latest autofocus algorithms and doubled sensor read speed to accelerate its AF performance, and it has a five-axis in-body image stabilisation (IBIS) system, providing up to 6.5 stops of advantage for handheld shooting. And for still days, or landscapes free of movement, it also has a Pixel Shift Multi-Shot mode generating 200MP images.

Best of all, this comes in a portable and durable form, bringing the undoubted image quality of the larger sensor to more landscape, nature and wildlife photographers. With a weather-sealed magnesium alloy casing and operation down to -10°C, the GFX50S II weighs approximately 900g and measures 104.2x87.2mm. It also has a more comfortable grip than its predecessor, with a deep, ergonomic design, and more intuitive handling via a DSLR-style mode dial and six customisable settings.

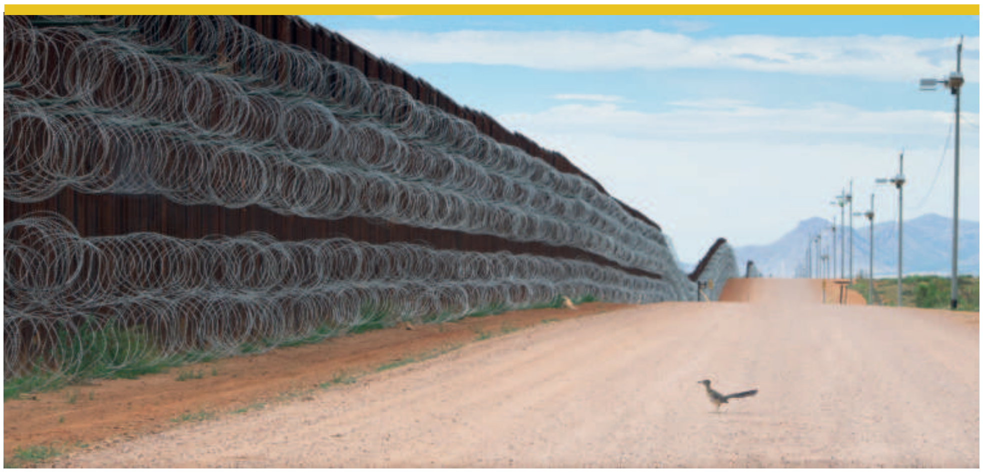
The GFX50S II is available body only (£3,499) and with the new GF35-70mm f/4.5-5.6 WR zoom lens (£3,899). Find out more at *fujifilm.co.uk*.

Wellcome forests

As part of the Wellcome Collection's *On Happiness* season, artist Chrystel Lebas is displaying two new works from her photographic series Regarding Forests. Tying into the health-giving power of forest bathing, the large-scale photographs feature Hoh Rain Forest in Washington State, USA, as well as cedar woodland on the Japanese island of Yakushima, both containing some of the oldest living trees in the world, and will be accompanied by an ambient soundscape recorded on location as well as natural scents. The multi-sensory installation can be found within the Grade I listed North Wing at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, and runs until 2 December. Find out more at *wellcomecollection.org*.

© Chrystel Lebas

© Alejandro Prieto/Bird Photographer of the Year



Bird POTY winners revealed

After months of build-up, the Bird Photographer of the Year 2021 has been announced. The grand prize goes to Mexican photographer Alejandro Prieto, with his superb and poignant image of a roadrunner, stopped in its tracks by the US-Mexican border wall. Entered into the Birds in the Environment category, the picture perfectly frames the pressures that a political structure can heap on an area's biodiversity, and was taken on a Nikon D850 and 70-200mm f/2.8 lens. As well as the coveted title, it won him £5,000.

This year's contest saw more than 22,000 images entered, across categories including Best Portrait, Birds in Flight and Creative Imagery. There was also a Conservation Award, Portfolio Award and Young Bird Photographer, while the competition donated more than £8,000 of essential funding to its partner charity, Birds on the Brink (*birdsonthebrink.co.uk*).

Get involved at birdpoty.com and see more pictures and stories from the contest in the next issue of *OP*.

© Ian Daisley

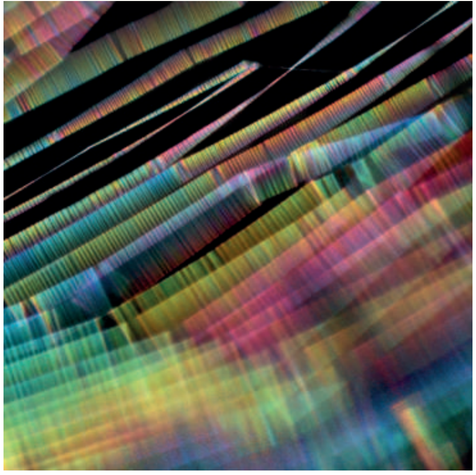
Celebrating Derwent Valley

To mark 20 years since the Derwent Valley Mills Unesco World Heritage Site was created, photographers are being invited to submit images of the historic and beautiful area for a celebratory book and exhibition. The Derwent Valley Photo Book Project was dreamed up by pro photographers Ashley Franklin and Ian Daisley, both living and working in the region. The project will include photos from them, and the successful contributors will be rewarded with cash prizes up to £250 and a free copy of the hardback book.

The site has a wealth of historical industry, thriving communities and seven nature reserves, and categories for submission include Industrial Heritage, People & Places and Wildlife. The deadline is 31 March 2022.

Up to 15 images can be submitted per person, and the book will be published in June 2022. Head to *derwentvalleyimages.co.uk* for more.

© Rachel Piper/WildArt Photographer of the Year



The art of the wild

Coming to the end of its inaugural year, WildArt Photographer of the Year is a photography competition created and run by dedicated wildlife photographers. Brainchild of nature specialist Rob Read, the international competition celebrates original, creative and artistic visions of the natural world, as well as supporting 10 different conservation causes. It's open to pro and amateur photographers of all ages, and spans 10 monthly categories, into which you can contribute as many images as you like.

One of the most recent categories was Abstracts, which saw a winning image from the UK's Rachel Piper, with her beautiful shot of a spider's web, and 13 other highly commended shots, picked from the round's 100-strong shortlist. Winning £500, Rachel shot her image *Hidden Beauty* on a Canon EOS 7D MkII and EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM lens.

October's theme is Colour, so head to *wildartpoty.com* now for more great images and details on how to enter.

© Dorset Wildlife Trust/James Burland

Eager for beavers?

A new UK government consultation could result in the reintroduction of beavers across the country. Currently, the only beavers living wild in the UK can be found in Scotland and along Devon's River Otter. But many believe in the positive benefits of these industrious herbivores, who've been absent in the wild since the 16th century due to hunting. They restore and maintain wetland habitats, create lakes and bogs where other species can flourish, while beaver activity can hold back water and reduce the risk of flooding. You have until 17 November to have your say at *wtru.st/act-for-beavers*.

OUT THERE

BOOKS

PHOTOGRAPHING
ICELAND
ICELAND

Photographing Iceland
James Rushforth
fotoVUE
Volume 1, £49.95; Volume 2, £29.95

With its wild and elemental landscapes, Iceland remains one of the world's most enticing destinations for outdoor photographers. Few people can claim to know the country as well as James Rushforth, who dedicated four years to making *Photographing Iceland*, a set of two remarkably comprehensive guidebooks.

Together, the books feature 170 locations, 1,000 viewpoints and include 1,200 images. Volume 1 covers Reykjavíc and the Golden Circle, southern, eastern and northern Iceland, the Westfjords, the Snæfellsnes peninsula and the Ring Road that encircles the whole country; Volume 2 focuses on the spectacular but inhospitable Highlands and Interior.

Sunset at Háifoss, one of the highest waterfalls in Iceland. © James Rushforth

Locations include the Breiðamerkurjökull ice caves (featured on the cover of Volume 1), Goðafoss waterfall, Breiðamerkursnadur (aka Diamond Beach), Jökulsárlón glacial lake, and the mountains of Vestrahorn and Landmannalauger. Wildlife highlights are also covered, such as the birdlife and foxes of the Látrabjarg cliffs and whale watching at Skjálfandi Bay.

There are suggestions on what to shoot, the best viewpoints, detailed maps, instructions on how to get to each location, accessibility, when to visit and where to stay. In addition, there are equipment guides, seasonal highlights (including the aurora borealis), suggested itineraries and more.

Those planning a trip to Iceland will find the books invaluable; and if the country is not already on your bucket list, it will be after seeing the breathtaking locations presented here.

WILDLIFE BOOKS

From an exploration of animal camouflage to a new study of honey bees and a fight for survival in the freezing Antarctic, here are three books that offer insights into our amazing natural world.

Camouflage: Masters of Disguise from the Animal Kingdom
Steve Parker
Ivy Press
Hardback, £25

Written by science author Steve Parker, *Camouflage* profiles 100 animals that have ingenious ways of staying unseen. Among them are the secretive snow leopard, whose thick, furry coat provides camouflage and insulation in the mountains it inhabits; the natterjack toad which blends seamlessly into its surroundings in dunes and heathland; and the comma butterfly which resembles a rough-edged old leaf. The last chapter is dedicated to the weird and wonderful creatures hiding in our seas and oceans, including decorator crabs, which cover themselves with items from their environment.

This is a book that makes you wonder at the extraordinary adaptations that animals have acquired in order to survive.

© Steve Parker

© Ingo Arndt

Honey Bees
Ingo Arndt and Jürgen Tautz
Natural History Museum
Hardback, £25

The mysterious, hidden world of the forest-dwelling honey bee is the subject of this book by Germany's leading bee expert Jürgen Tautz and nature photographer Ingo Arndt. The pair travelled to forests across Central Europe to uncover previously unknown details about the lives of these amazing insects, and their findings are beautifully presented here. We are given glimpses into their dwellings inside hollow trees, stunning macro shots capturing behaviour such as feeding and predation, and the bees' genius honeycomb constructions. At the end of the book, Arndt explains how he captured his groundbreaking shots.

Penguin: A Story of Survival
Stefan Christmann
teNeues
Hardback, £35

Award-winning photographer Stefan Christmann spent two winters in Atka Bay, Antarctica, immersing himself in the world of emperor penguins. As you can imagine, the pictures are superb, capturing the hostile, frozen landscape the birds inhabit, the deep, complex bonds they form and their battle for survival. We are given insights into their courtship and mating rituals, and shown the penguins' dedication to raising their young. Christmann was moved to tears by some of the moments he captured, and the love he felt for the penguins is conveyed in his touching photographs and his poetic writing.

© Stefan Christmann

EXHIBITIONS

© Nicholas Roemmelt

Astronomy Photographer of the Year 13

» National Maritime Museum, London
» To 7 August 2022

Astronomy Photographer of the Year has once again uncovered an astounding collection of images, and they are now on display at the National Maritime Museum. Overall winner Shuchang Dong takes pride of place in the exhibition with *The Golden Ring*, his remarkable image of the annular solar eclipse. Other winning pictures include a mesmerising rainbow-coloured California Nebula captured by British photographer Terry Hancock over seven nights; Venus rising over the rocky horizon of the moon by Nicolas Lefaudeux (France); and a mesmerising aurora display taken from the bridge of a ship by the Third Officer Dmitrii Rybalka (Russia).

» rmg.co.uk/astrophoto

Amazônia

» Science Museum, London
» 13 October to March 2022

The work of world-renowned Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado goes on display at the Science Museum this autumn in a major new exhibition. Salgado worked in the Amazon for six years with 12 different indigenous communities to create his new photography project. Comprising more than 200 powerful black & white images, several of which have never before been exhibited in the UK, it presents Salgado's view of the Amazon when the forest is approaching a crucial tipping point in the fight against climate change.

» sciencemuseum.org.uk

© Sebastião Salgado/nbpictures

Yanomami shaman in ritual before the ascent to Pico da Neblina, State of Amazonas, Brazil, 2014.

© Delmas Lehman/Shutterstock

North West Bird Watching Festival

» WWT Martin Mere, Lancashire » 16-17 October

WWT Martin Mere's North West Bird Watching Festival, the only bird fair of 2021, returns this October. The weekend event includes talks by wildlife photographers Neil Philips and Alan Hewitt, optic and bird ringing demonstrations, and a range of exhibitors. The reserve will be open from 8am both days to give visitors the opportunity to watch the spectacle of thousands of pink-footed geese leaving the roost.

» wwt.org.uk/nwbwf

Bearded Seal at Hamnavoe Marina, Shetland.
© Austin Taylor, Wildlife Portrait winner 2020

Scottish Nature Photography Awards

» Logan Botanic Garden, Stranraer, Dumfries and Galloway
» 1 October to 15 November

The winners of the latest Scottish Nature Photography Awards are now on show in the exhibition space at Logan Botanic Garden on the south-western tip of Scotland. Launched in 2010, the competition celebrates Scotland as a top destination for landscape and wildlife photographers, and one of its key objectives is to encourage and promote emerging talent. The exhibition includes *Taking Root* by overall winner Charles Everitt, a quietly powerful image of a packet of pink purslane rooted in the base of a tree, photographed on the banks of the Water of Leith.

» After Logan, the photographs will be displayed at FifeSpace Gallery in Glenrothes from 17 November to 8 January 2022.
rbge.org.uk/visit/logan-botanic-garden

Coming up for Air: Stephen Gill – A Retrospective

» Arnolfini, Bristol
» 16 October to 16 January 2022

Marking the 30 years (so far) that Stephen Gill has worked as a photographer, this retrospective exhibition presents new work shown for the first time, including *Please Notify the Sun*, alongside some of his most iconic series, such as *Hackney Flowers*, *Buried* and *Talking to Ants*. It will also feature the first UK presentation of Gill's award-winning series, *The Pillar*.

» arnolfini.org.uk

From *The Pillar* 2015-2019 © Stephen Gill

In conversation with

Stuart McGlennon

Based in the Lake District, professional landscape photographer and gallery owner ***Stuart McGlennon*** *owes much of his recent success to lessons learned as an international sportsman*

Interview by Nick Smith

When Stuart McGlennon first caught the attention of *Outdoor Photography*, he was a relative newcomer on the landscape scene, making a living from his day job at the Sellafield nuclear power site close to his hometown of Seascale. But it appears four years can be a long time in photography, and since 2017, when we last spoke, he's packed in his job, turned pro and taken over a gallery that he was once a contributor to. 'It's been a busy time,' says the now full-time professional landscaper and proprietor of the rebranded Lens District Gallery in Keswick, located as its name suggests in Stuart's home turf of Wordsworth's Lakes.

It was one of those moments that can change your life. 'I was in a good job at Sellafield and the money was good too.' But being in safety – no point making any Homer Simpson jokes here, as Stuart's heard them all before – it was also a 'very stressful job which came with inconsistent shift pattens' that didn't slot together well with his family life. When the opportunity to take over the gallery came along, 'I couldn't quite believe it, to be honest. It was a case of realising that if I didn't take the chance while I could, something like this might never come along again.' Stuart went to seek the advice of a friend who happens to be a successful businessman, sat down and crunched the numbers with him and, in the absence of any visible downside to the proposition, 'just went for it. There was, of course, the risk of turning away from the obvious security of a salaried job, but it actually all made sense.'

Making sense is one thing but making it work is another. When I first spoke to Stuart, he was on his way to becoming a highly accomplished landscaper, and so I was somewhat taken aback to find that he'd only been shooting to any degree of seriousness for less than two years. This fact alone bears witness to the intense focus and dedication that the 39-year-old brings to bear on everything he does, and so it is no surprise to discover that in the past he's been an international sportsman. In fact, he attributes his success as a photographer (and now entrepreneur) to the lessons he learned in sport.

He says his personality is built in such a way that he can't do things in a casual fashion: as a teenager, he played badminton for England in world junior championships ('and all that sort of stuff'), and 'as with all sports, when you get to the top level, it's very intense. There's an awful lot of training and commitment.' By the time he stopped competing against the best, he'd been touring all over Europe for six years. Then he became a 'decent' county level golfer. Then he became a photographer.

While badminton is an indoor sport, Stuart is keen to point out that he's always been an outdoor person, playing football and rugby at district or county level alongside his involvement in golf. 'And while I might not have had an instinctive connection to the landscape as such during that time, I've always been one for being outside.' This was to assist in his transition to photographer, as Stuart thinks that it's probably easier for an outdoor person to learn about photography than it is for an indoor-based photographer to learn about the great outdoors. 'It would be very difficult for someone who leads a sedentary lifestyle to all of a sudden decide that they were going to do landscape photography. I've always said that I'm fortunate to live in the Lake District, which is one of the best places in the UK for landscape photography, so I'm certainly not short of inspiration on my doorstep either.'

Previous page Dark Elgol | *Above* Rannerdale bluebells | *Opposite* Reeds

Stuart recalls that he bought his first camera on a whim to take fell-walking with him. This was back in January 2016, after having bought a photography magazine and thinking that this was something he'd like to try his hand at, 'and I got addicted'. But rather than reach the point where he was happy with the photographs he was taking, the reverse was true: 'I quickly became unhappy with my photos. So, it was going to go one of two ways: I would either abandon it completely, or I'd knuckle down and try to improve these pictures.'

Stuart then followed a route that seemed so familiar to him from his sporting days. He absorbed as much technical information as he could and joined internet communities. 'I know that online forums aren't as popular as they once were due to the rise of social media and YouTube. But back then they were really important because I was able to make contact with photographers who were much further down the line than I was – and I was keen to learn from them.'

He develops his point by saying that one of the things he learned from his sporting career is that you can always find someone who is 'better than you who will pass on their knowledge. I know it's not for everyone, but I was keen for critical feedback. I wasn't frightened of someone ripping one of my pictures to pieces if it meant that I was going to get better at this.' This ambition to succeed is fundamental to Stuart's approach to photography in the sense that 'whatever I do, I'm going to put 100% into it. People don't seem to like the word ambition these days, but it's been ingrained into me through sport. You get very tunnel-visioned about things and so it's hard for me to pick up something like photography and do it casually.'

When we talk about how far he's come as a photographer in the five years he's been doing it – his website lists eight significant awards as well as numerous commercial endorsements – he keeps returning to the concepts of commitment, dedication and learning from others. He hardly mentions the aesthetic, creative or artistic aspects of photography in our conversation. You get the feeling that for him, these are already in place, taken as axiomatic.

When pushed to make some sort of statement about his photographs, Stuart is happy to accept my suggestion that his landscapes are in the 'classical' idiom. 'I think you're right,' he says, adding that 'these days, even since I started five years ago, there seems to be a lot of emphasis on the fast-changing number of styles or fashions in photography. There also seems

Opposite (top) Holme Fell heather
Opposite (below left) Golden glow
Opposite (below right) Needle rainbow
Left (top) Fence 1 mute
Left (below) Flurry final

to be lots of pressure on photographers who are starting out at the moment to find a style that's going to be eye-catching.'

It might sound really boring, he elaborates, 'but all I've ever tried to do is to get out of the way of my work as much as possible. I want the landscape to do the talking for me. If that means that my work is very classical, maybe in the style of Joe Cornish – and I'm not saying I'm Joe Cornish by the way – then that's fine. Obviously, there's all the technical stuff that goes into the image, and I'm not trying to get the viewer to think of those things either. I just want the viewer to look at the picture in its simplest form.'

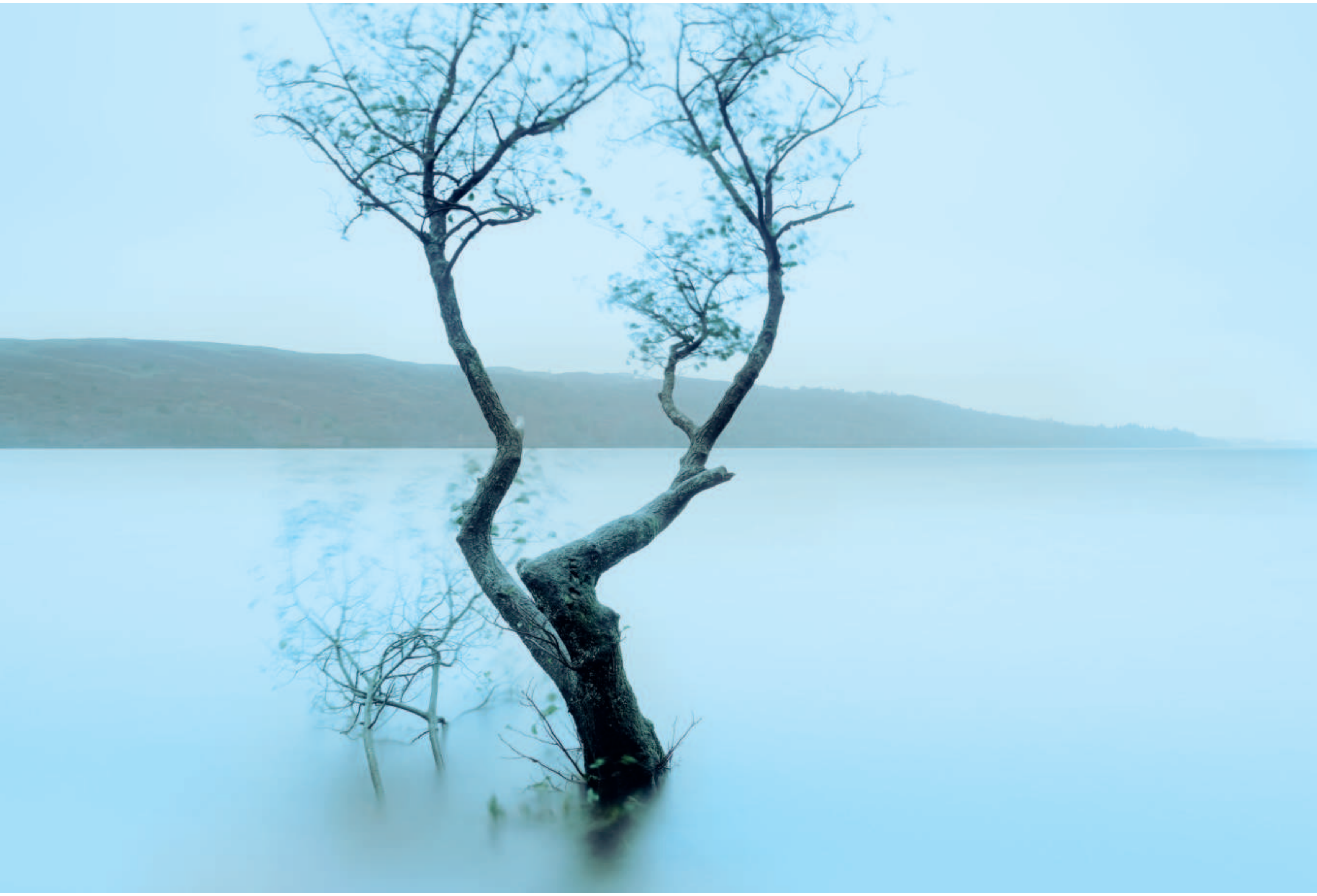
One of the problems with letting the landscape speak for itself is that it's got to have something to say. It follows for Stuart that there's no point in saying what others have said in their work and so you've got to dig deep to find something different. And to do that, you need to know your chosen landscape inside out, which means never straying far from base camp with the camera. 'This goes back to when I started. I went through the usual processes that people do when they first set out in landscape photography. You have all these outside influences about locations in Scotland or Dorset or wherever. The danger of this is that it can turn into a bit of a box-ticking exercise.'

Stuart says that he was pleased to realise early on that this was a route he didn't want to travel down, partially because it was 'too easy', but also because he called the Lake District home. 'I looked at it pragmatically and thought that most photographers would give their right arm to live where I live. And so, I decided to really buckle down and get to know the landscape here intimately, and as time goes on my inclination to travel further afield gets less and less.'

Even though the Lake District is, to use Stuart's description 'quite compact', by his reckoning there's enough of it yet to be discovered photographically to make it worthwhile dropping anchor for the foreseeable future. Quite apart from the commercial responsibilities of generating local imagery that will sell in his gallery, there's the growing suspicion in his mind that there's no point travelling into alien territory to shoot 'the same stuff as everybody else', when you can do something expressively different at home. 'I could spend 10 lifetimes covering the Lake District and still not finish with it. So, why go anywhere else?'

To see more of Stuart's photography, visit lensdistrict.com

Left (top) The mill
Left (below) Passage land
Opposite Buttermere bloom



*While global warming could change the very definition of landscape photography as we know it, **Pete Bridgwood** believes there's still a chance to sway the masses with our unique skill sets*

For 60 years, we've known about the potential threats of climate change, but sadly, until recently, scientists have largely been ignored. This is partly due to a huge marketing effort by those with vested interests in maintaining the profitability of their damaging industries, but also because the claims seemed too far-fetched to believe when everything was so relatively calm and trouble-free.

But ever-increasing global temperatures will mean more extreme weather events, with summer heatwaves evaporating our lakes and increasingly heavy storms flooding them, along with the permanent loss of vast swathes of our coast and lowlands as sea levels rise. Some predictions say that our grandchildren will rarely, if ever, see snow. Surely not?

If someone had told us about the heartbreaking devastation and disruption that was about to be unleashed on humankind before the pandemic, most of us would not have believed them either, but maybe this was just the tip of the iceberg – if you'll pardon the analogy – when we consider the potential changes we are about to experience.

Over the coming decades, from a landscape photography perspective, our freedom to travel is likely to become increasingly restricted. There will be imposed physical limitations due to our encroaching coastline and the destruction of travel networks, but also ethical restrictions as we all start to feel increasingly pressured to reduce our personal carbon footprints (renewable energy will hopefully help to rebalance this side of the equation).

Midge nets will become a requisite part of our attire throughout the country, and the flora and fauna will change as climate increasingly favours the survival or extinction of different species. If the predictions are correct, then landscape photographs made in the UK in 30 years' time will look very different to the views we're accustomed to.

The good news is that there still remains a small glimmer of hope, but apart from optimising our lifestyles and reducing our personal carbon footprints, what can we as landscape photographers do to help? I am reminded of Ansel Adams, who was as much an activist as an artist, and throughout his life used his artistry and influence to lobby those in power and successfully protect the American wilderness. We too now have a window of opportunity, both to record the landscapes of today for posterity and potentially even sway consensus and help to change the habits of our audience.

Before Desmond, Coniston, Cumbria, 2015
Fujifilm X-Pro2 (pre-production model), XF14mm f/2.8 R, ISO 200, 20secs at f/11

FUJIFILM

X-E4
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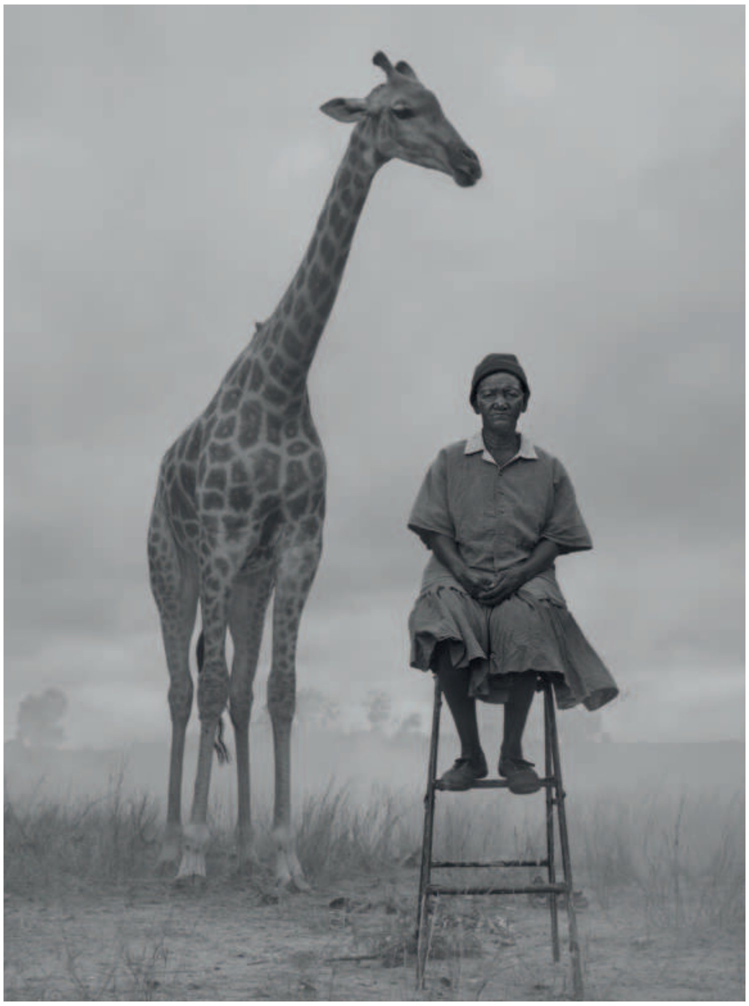
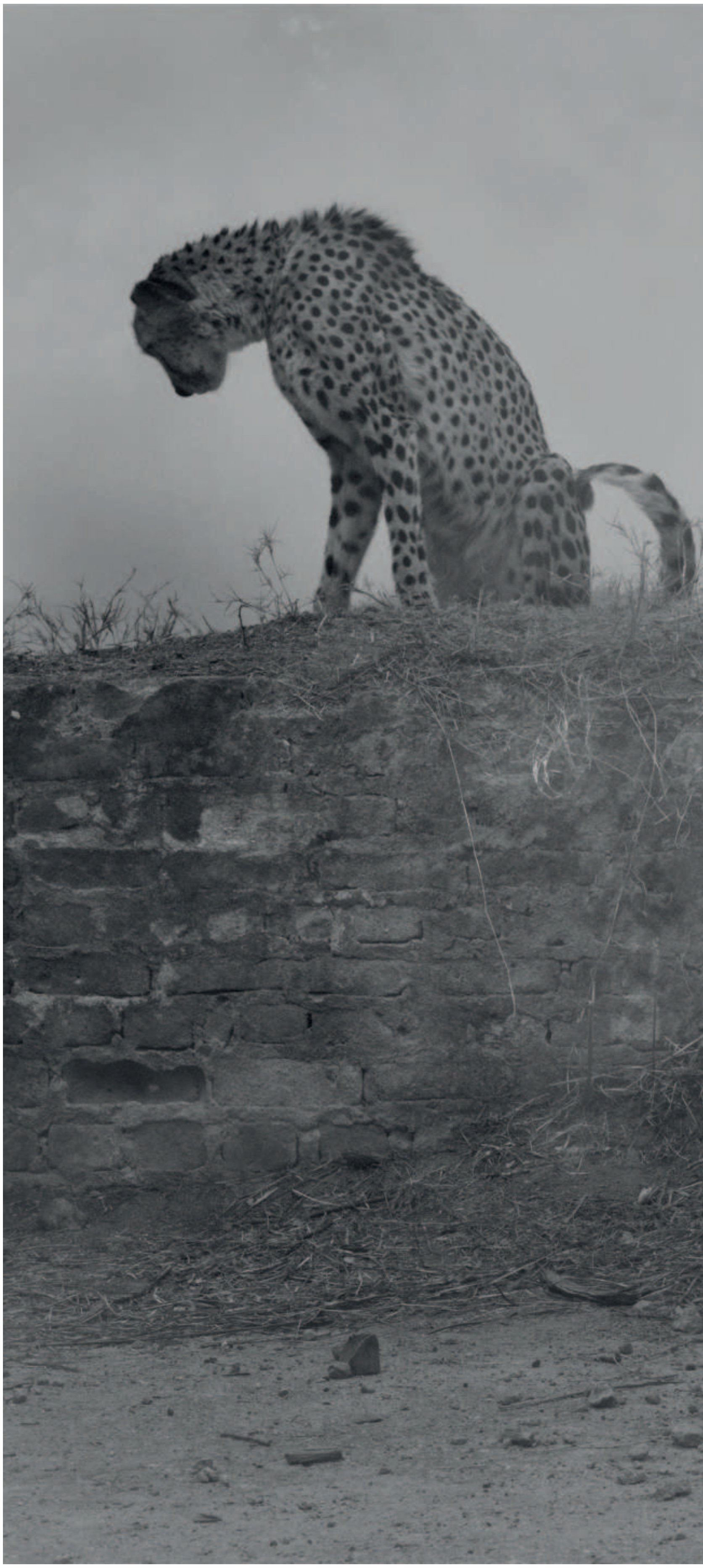


Helen and Sky, Zimbabwe, 2020



The Day May Break

Nick Brandt's new collection of pictures is the first part of a global series portraying people and animals that have been impacted by environmental degradation and destruction

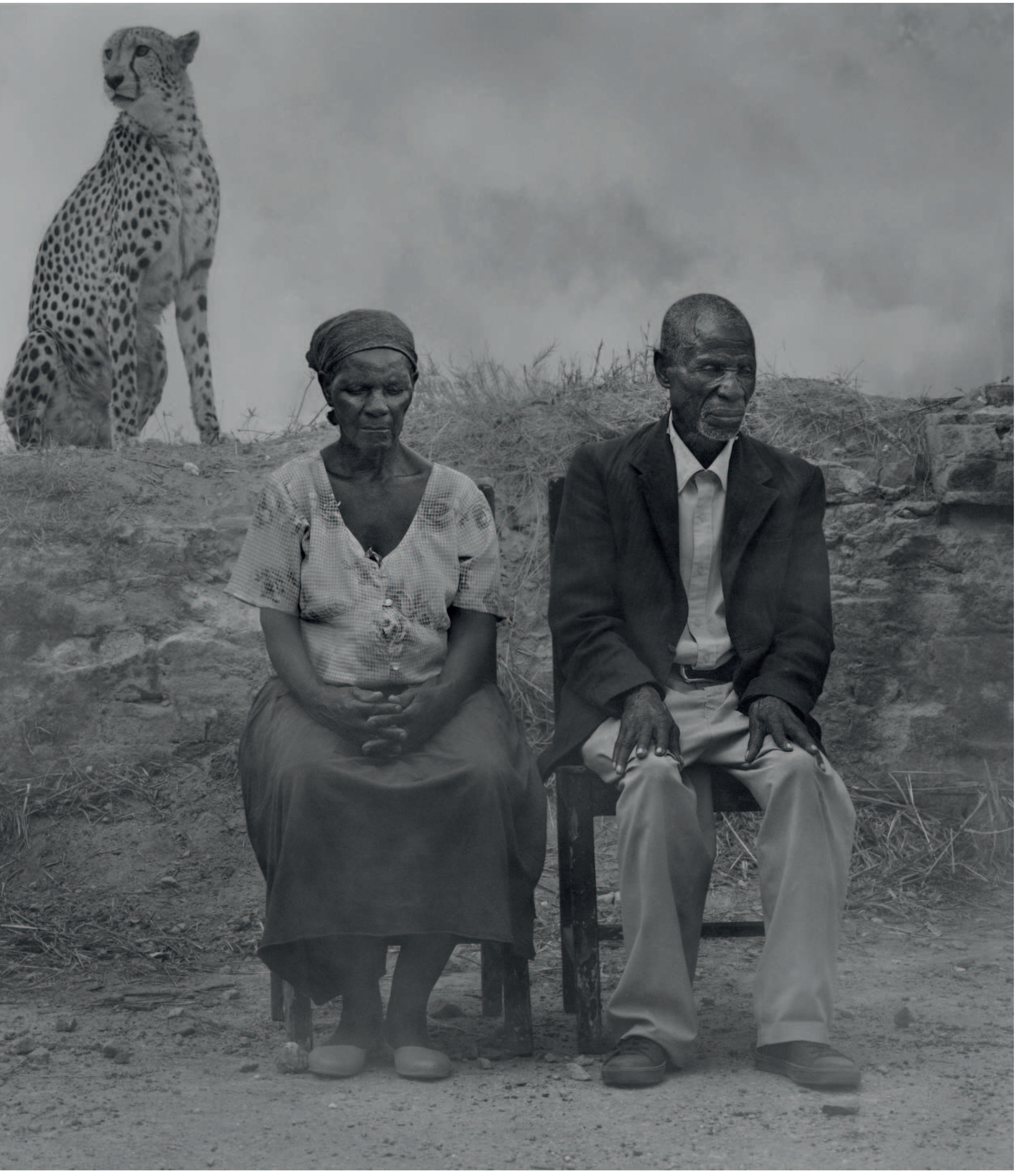
For his new series, *The Day May Break*, Nick Brandt photographed in five sanctuaries or conservancies in Zimbabwe and Kenya. The animals are almost all long-term rescues, victims of everything from the poaching of their parents to habitat destruction and poisoning. These animals can never be released back into the wild. The people have all been badly affected by climate change – some displaced by cyclones that destroyed their homes, others uprooted and impoverished by years-long droughts.

The Day May Break is published by Hatje Cantz.

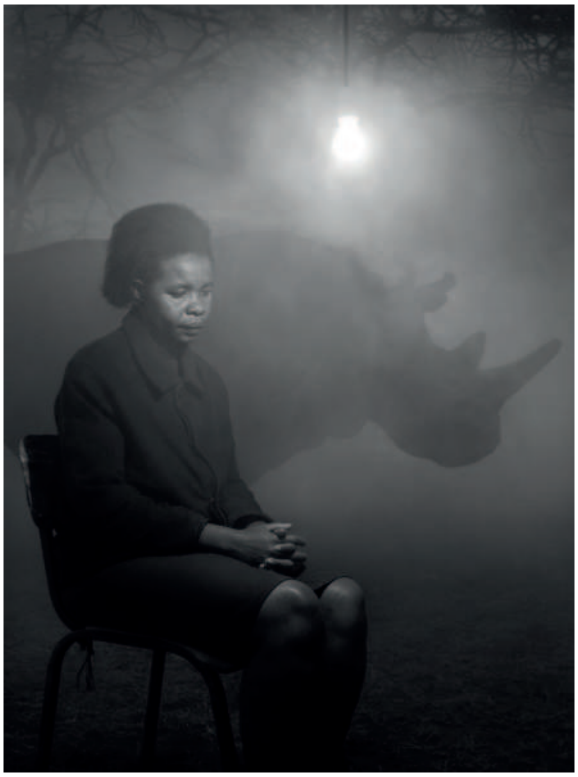
Pictures from The Day May Break can be seen at Atlas Gallery in London and Fahey Klein Gallery in Los Angeles from September 2021, and Edwynn Houk Gallery in New York and Polka Galerie in Paris from January 2022.

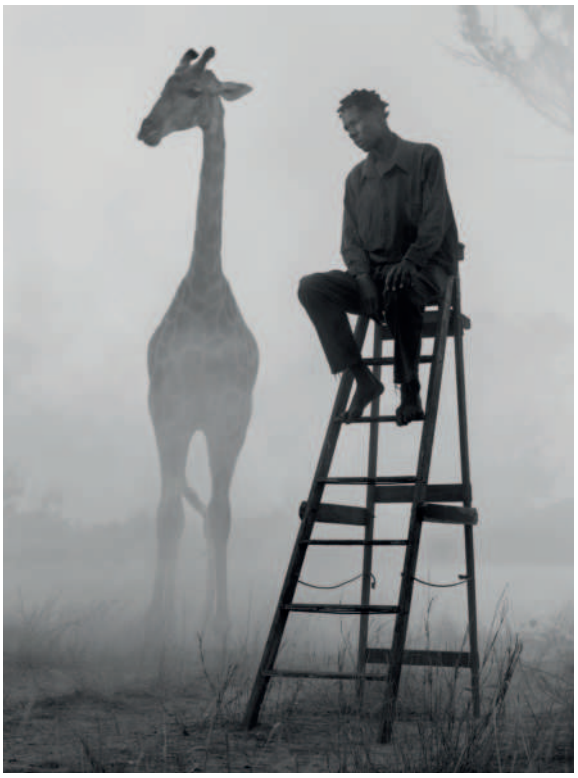
nickbrandt.com

Overleaf Left (top) **Fatuma, Ali and Bupa, Kenya, 2020** *Left (below)* **James and Fatu, Kenya, 2020**
Right (top) **Alice, Stanley and Najin, Kenya, 2020** *Right (below)* **Thomas and Vincent, Zimbabwe, 2020**



Regina, Jack, Levi and Diesel, Zimbabwe, 2020





Top (left)
Teresa and Najin, Kenya 2020

Top (right)
Richard and Sky, Zimbabwe 2020

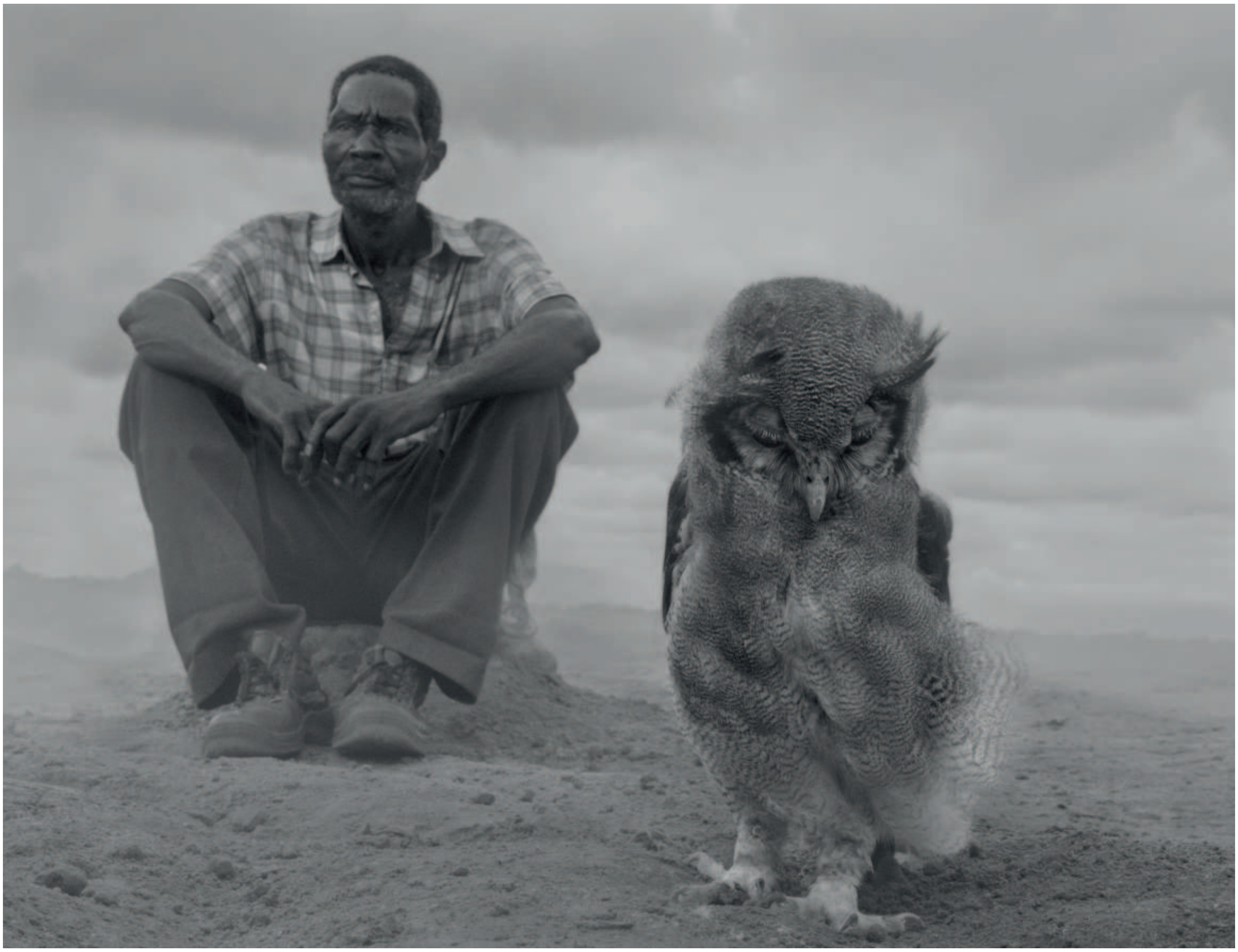
Below
Patrick and Harriet on ground, Zimbabwe, 2020

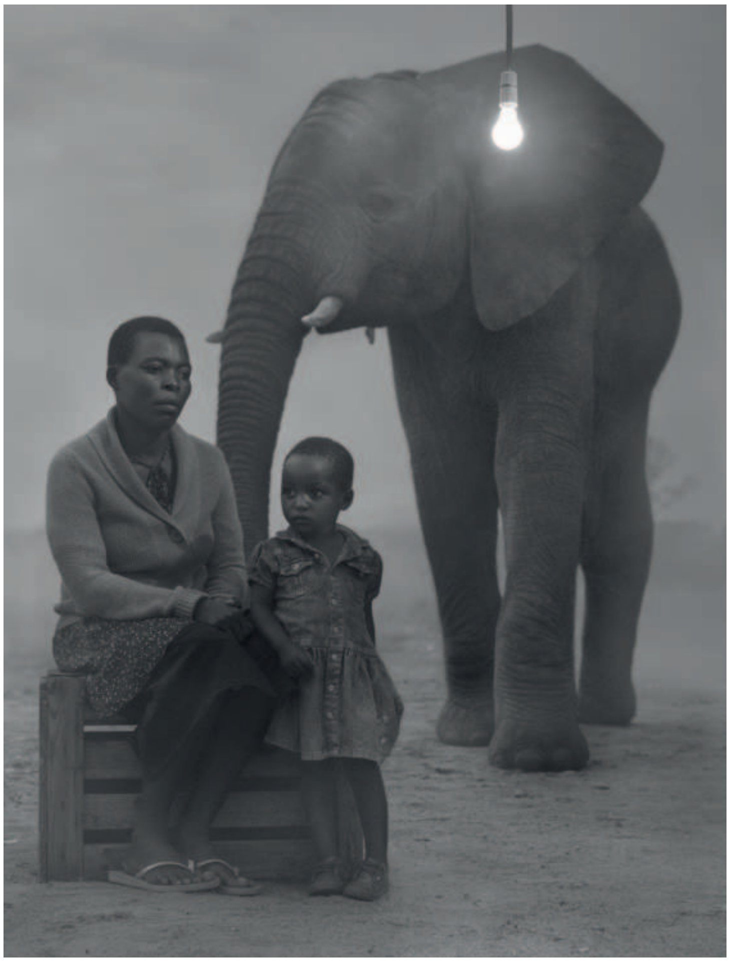
Opposite (top left)
Luckness, Winnie and Kura, Zimbabwe, 2020

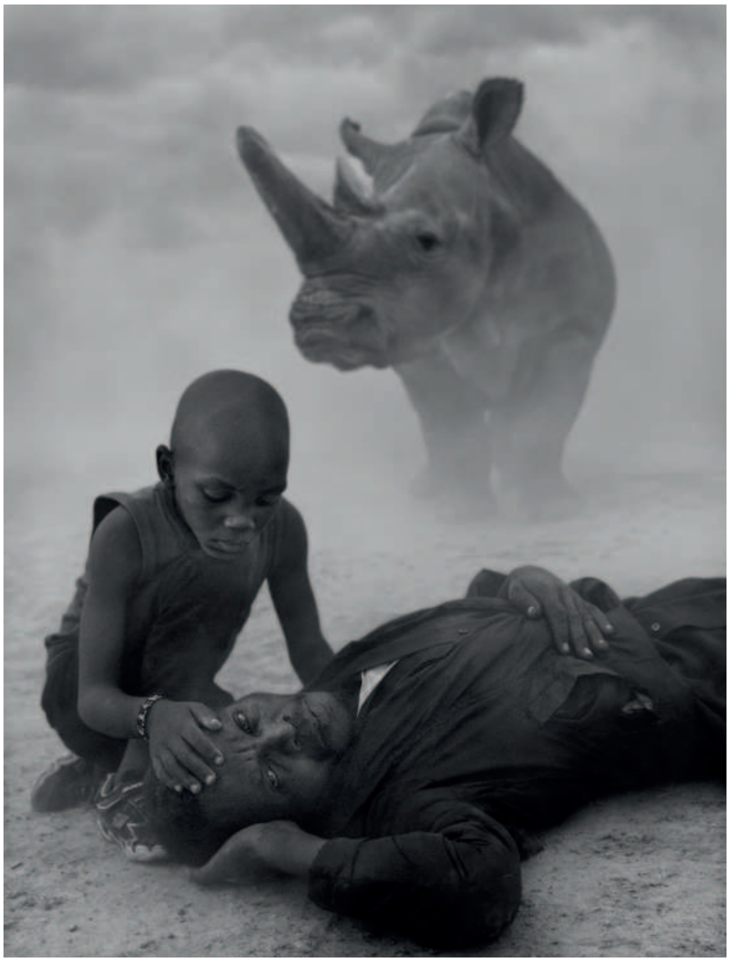
Opposite (top right)
Halima, Abdul and Frida, Kenya, 2020

Opposite (below left)
James, Peter and Najin, Kenya, 2020

Opposite (below right)
Kuda and Sky II, Zimbabwe, 2020







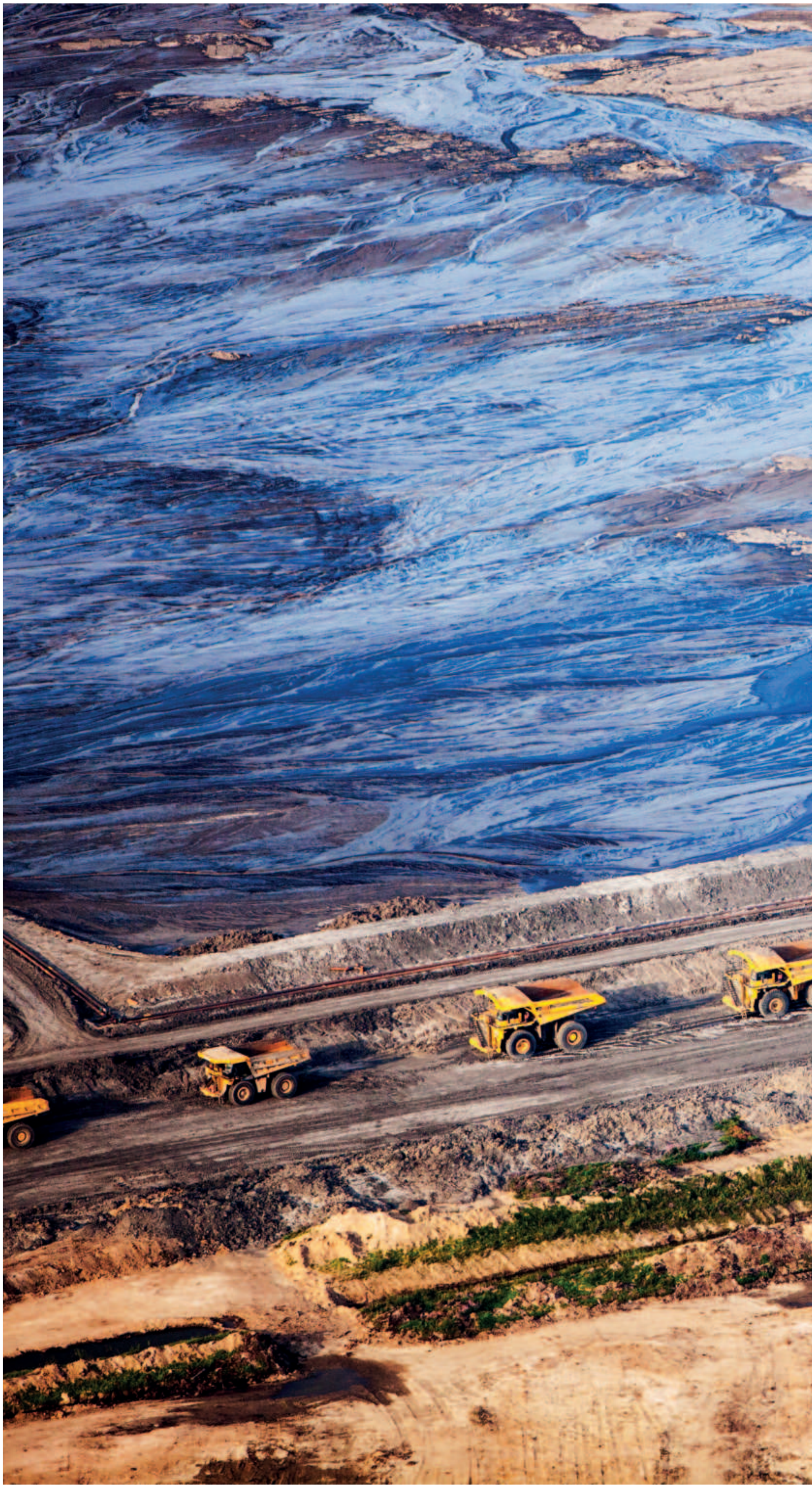
Toxic wasteland

Canada's synthetic oil production is causing environmental destruction on an epic scale, says Ashley Cooper

I almost weep every time I view this image. A portion of Canada's once-pristine boreal forest has been clear-felled and turned into a toxic wasteland. Of all man's efforts to exploit fossil fuels, the Canadian tar sands are by far the most environmentally destructive. A mix of bitumen, sands, clays and gravels, they can be turned into synthetic oil by the addition of chemicals.

Deposits close to the surface are strip mined. This involves clear-felling the boreal forest, leading to the second fastest rate of deforestation on the planet. Each 2.5km² of boreal forest supports 500 breeding pairs of migrant birds, as well as being home to wolf, lynx, cougar, black bear, grizzly bear, wolverine, bison, moose, caribou and beaver. It is also an important carbon sink.

To separate the bitumen from the sands and gravels, the tar sand needs to be melted. This is achieved by forcing steam through it. The amount of gas used to make the steam means the resulting oil has a carbon footprint up to five times that of conventional oil, making it into a climate change disaster.



Dispatches from the Collapse

Things are not going to get better. In fact, they are going to get worse. Much worse. So stop pretending and start planning. Not tomorrow. Not next week. Now. ***Niall Benvie*** *reports from the Collapse*

If there is one thing I've learned over a lifetime of advocating for the natural world, it's that long-form catastrophe frightens no one other than far-sighted planners; no one believes a Cassandra, after all. Moreover, there is already an abundance of noisy commentators well-endowed with opinions but lacking in the knowledge department and I don't want to add to their din. For that reason, I'm going to base my comments concerning the climate crisis only on direct experience and observation, ideas I have a reasonable chance of defending. And along the way I'm going to say things you probably don't want to hear.

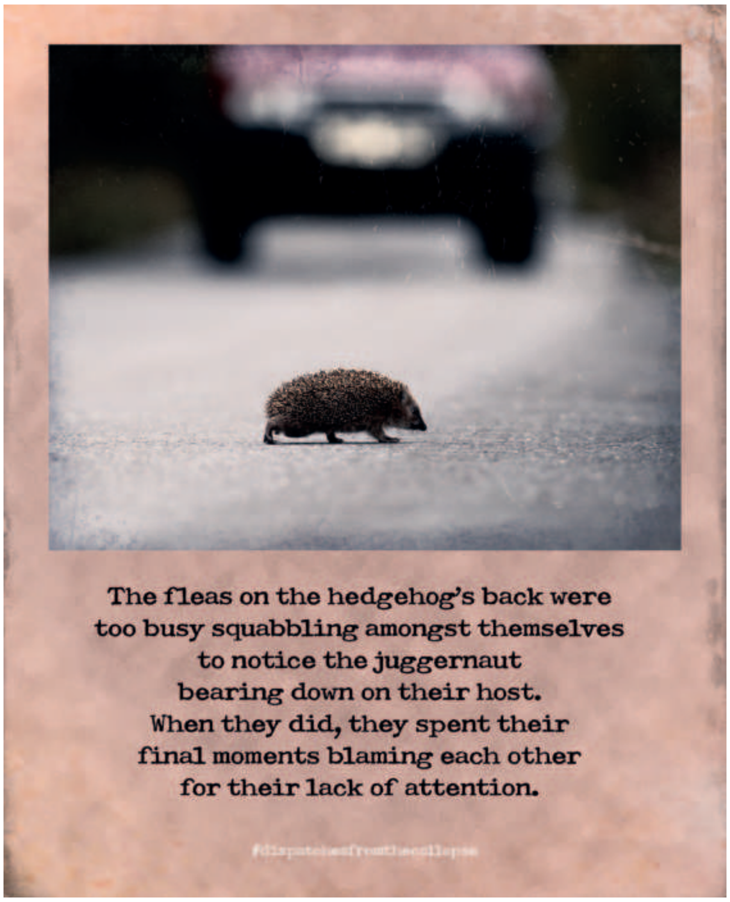
A couple of years ago, over a 10-day period, I fell into a groove of ideas that resulted in the *Dispatches from the Collapse* collection. When I wrote the words and created the images in this series, hope was far from my mind. Rather, I imagined the pieces as relics found in a drawer in an abandoned, sun-bleached house, decades from now. The imagery and messages attached to them are from an earlier period, just as 'The Collapse' was getting underway.

The words are rueful, sometimes even bitter, often with an unspoken 'I told you so'. In them, I draw attention to a wide range of post-Collapse scenarios, with a view, in part, to highlight our current naivety and abject lack of preparation for what is to come. In short, the time for 'what can we do to avoid…?' is already past and planning for 'what will we do when…?' needs to take precedence. We've all witnessed an assortment of governments caught on the back foot because they didn't dare to believe a particular outcome could arise and failed to plan accordingly. This time, the consequences of misplaced optimism are altogether graver.

I suspect I need to defend my presumption of Collapse. Optimists among you, after all, can point to past revolutions where a self-evident wrong was righted, sometimes in a remarkably short space of time, by the popular determination that things had to change. The end of statutory segregation in the American South, apartheid in South Africa, and release from Soviet suppression of the Baltic States loom large in my lifetime. But I'm sorry to point out that, in most cases, these revolutions involved small, privileged minorities being made to relinquish some or all of their power to the benefit of the greater society.

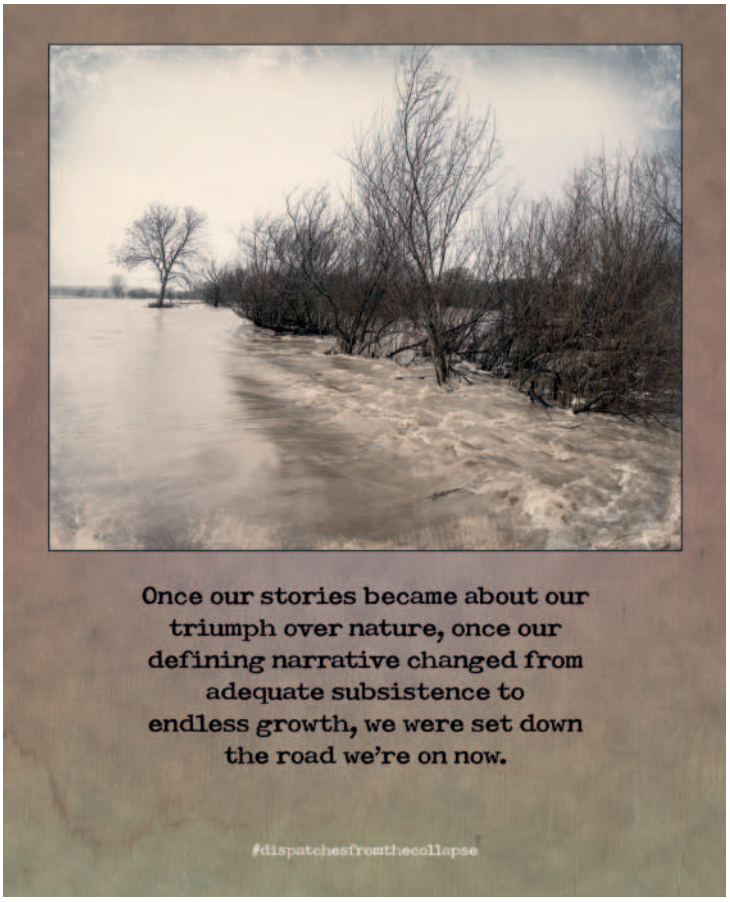
The trouble this time is that it is we, the enablers and beneficiaries of the industrial economy, who are the problem, not the New Zealand-bound Silicon Valley billionaires, oil sheiks or Russian oligarchs *per se*. And be in no doubt that it is the industrial economy, including intensive large-scale farming, that has brought us to this pass. As Paul Kingsnorth observes with resignation in his essay *Life versus the Machine*, 'Now I think that [all] humans like ease, material comfort, entertainment and conformity, and they do not like anyone who threatens to take these things away. I think that even those people who say these things should be taken away in order to prevent the collapse of life on Earth do not really mean it.'

There is a deafening dissonance, then, between our knowledge and behaviour in respect of our treatment of life – ours and that of non-humans – but it doesn't hurt enough, if indeed at all, to bring about any substantive change in behaviour. And why would it? From the moment we are born, the virtues of ease, comfort and economy are lauded ahead of all



The fleas on the hedgehog's back were
too busy squabbling amongst themselves
to notice the juggernaut
bearing down on their host.
When they did, they spent their
final moments blaming each other
for their lack of attention.

#dispatchesfromthecollapse

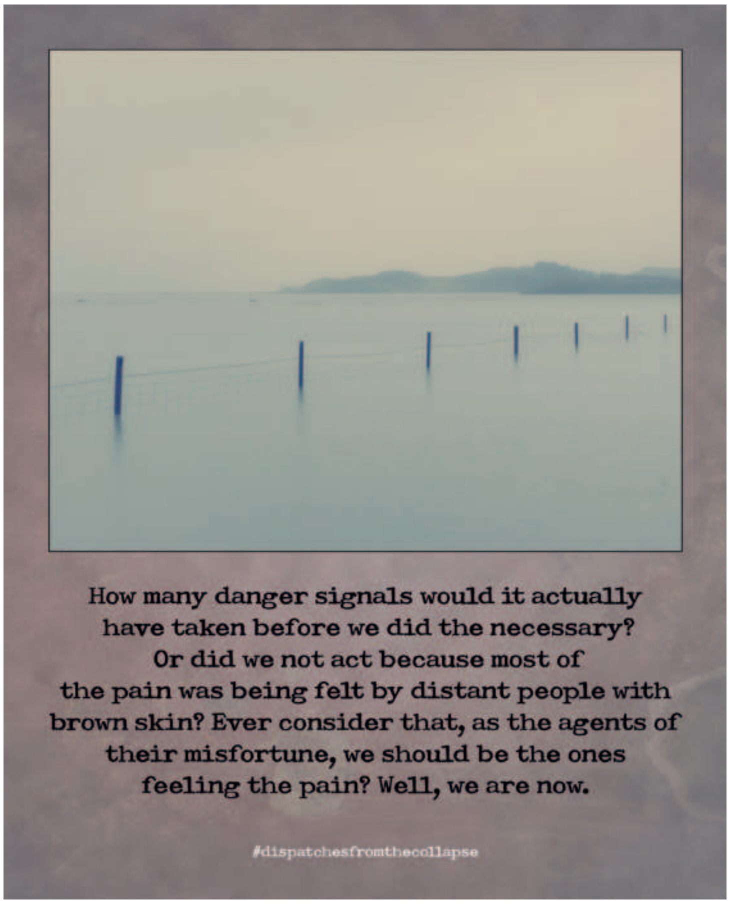


Once our stories became about our
triumph over nature, once our
defining narrative changed from
adequate subsistence to
endless growth, we were set down
the road we're on now.

#dispatchesfromthecollapse

We let ourselves put dogma ahead of compassion and used it to excuse all sorts of abuses. But it wasn't ideology that helped us down from the trees; it was cooperation and sharing, not the seeking out of abstract differences.

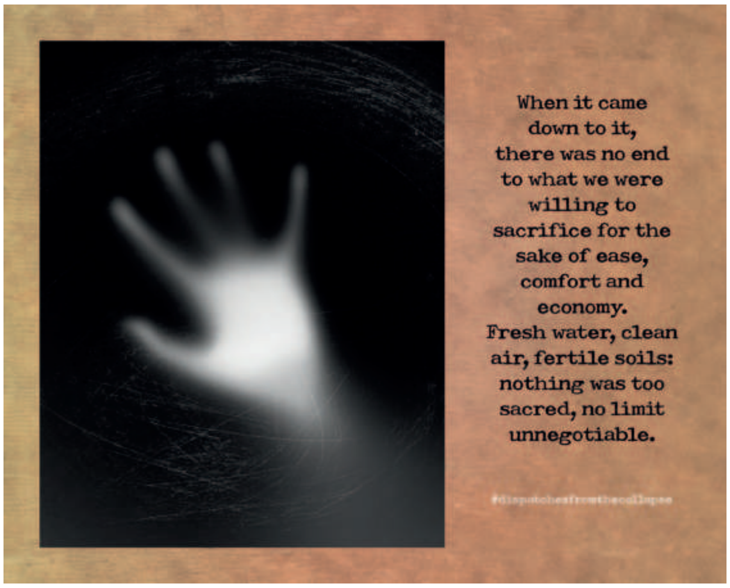
#dispatchesfromthecollapse



How many danger signals would it actually have taken before we did the necessary? Or did we not act because most of the pain was being felt by distant people with brown skin? Ever consider that, as the agents of their misfortune, we should be the ones feeling the pain? Well, we are now.

Never once, as we spent the Earth's capital so freely, did the possibility of foreclosure enter our minds. It came though, as inevitably it would. It's a great shame that we've long since forgotten how to live within our means.

#dispatchesfromthecollapse



When it came down to it, there was no end to what we were willing to sacrifice for the sake of ease, comfort and economy. Fresh water, clean air, fertile soils: nothing was too sacred, no limit unnegotiable.

others. I've seen no evidence of a widespread wish to give up driving large SUVs, even to drive them economically; to live in smaller houses with fewer electrical appliances; or to favour seasonal, local food production over the abundance and convenience of multinational supermarkets.

These are deep and ubiquitous cultural preferences rooted in atavistic feelings of security. They will not be undone in a generation, no matter how hard the current generation of youth climate activists push. But we'd do well to listen to them. It's a huge error to confuse 'naivety' for clarity. Yes, when you're 18, things are usually much more black and white than when you're older and have had to compromise endlessly with the system. But their worldview chimes with how natural processes actually operate. You can't strike a deal with extinction. Or negotiate with a flood. Or reason with erosion. Nature operates in absolutes and the simplicity of the movement's demand that we stop adding CO2 to the atmosphere now reflects what needs to be done. Or rather, needed to be done 30 years ago.

It's time to stop pretending that things are going to get better, that we can reconcile our wants with the needs of the Earth; acknowledge that the Collapse has indeed already begun and plan accordingly. Even if you are a Collapse Sceptic, just think of this as an exercise in precautionary planning, surely a cornerstone of responsible governance.

Excerpted from Niall's essay, *Dispatches from the Collapse*, available as a PDF on request from him. *info@niallbenvie.eu*

Conservation is not enough

What is rewilding? And will it encourage us to re-imagine our relationship with nature? ***Peter Cairns*** *sheds light on this relatively new concept and explains how visual imagery has aided rewilding north of the border*

When digital cameras became the latest thing in the early noughties, the business of nature photography changed forever. Like many others, I found myself floundering in an industry sinking under the weight of diminishing demand and burgeoning supply. The writing was on the wall.

Reinvention seems to be the norm for the creative community today, but changing your business model 20 years ago was a big deal. However, in 2003, I 'became' a conservation photographer. It seemed like a worthwhile use of my time and (limited) skills and within a year or so, I morphed from photographic trophy hunter – seeking out rare and charismatic wildlife to decorate calendar covers – to environmental storyteller, using my imagery to communicate the pressing challenges of the day. The problem is that I've never considered myself a conservationist.

The dictionary defines conservation as the protection and careful management of natural resources. And therein lies two problems: a global biodiversity crisis demands more than simply protecting the fragments and threads of nature we have left; and, moreover, 'careful management' suggests that nature needs our intervention and supervision in order to flourish. No, conservation was not enough back then, and it certainly isn't now.

Despite my reservations, I snuggled up to the major conservation bodies to try and influence their thinking – arrogant perhaps, naïve certainly. I quickly realised how tortuously bureaucratic and inherently risk-averse the conservation community had become. I saw those organisations that I believed were committed to a healthier planet, paralysed by process and political obligation; wedded to a philosophy that, with climate breakdown knocking on the door, was no longer fit for purpose.

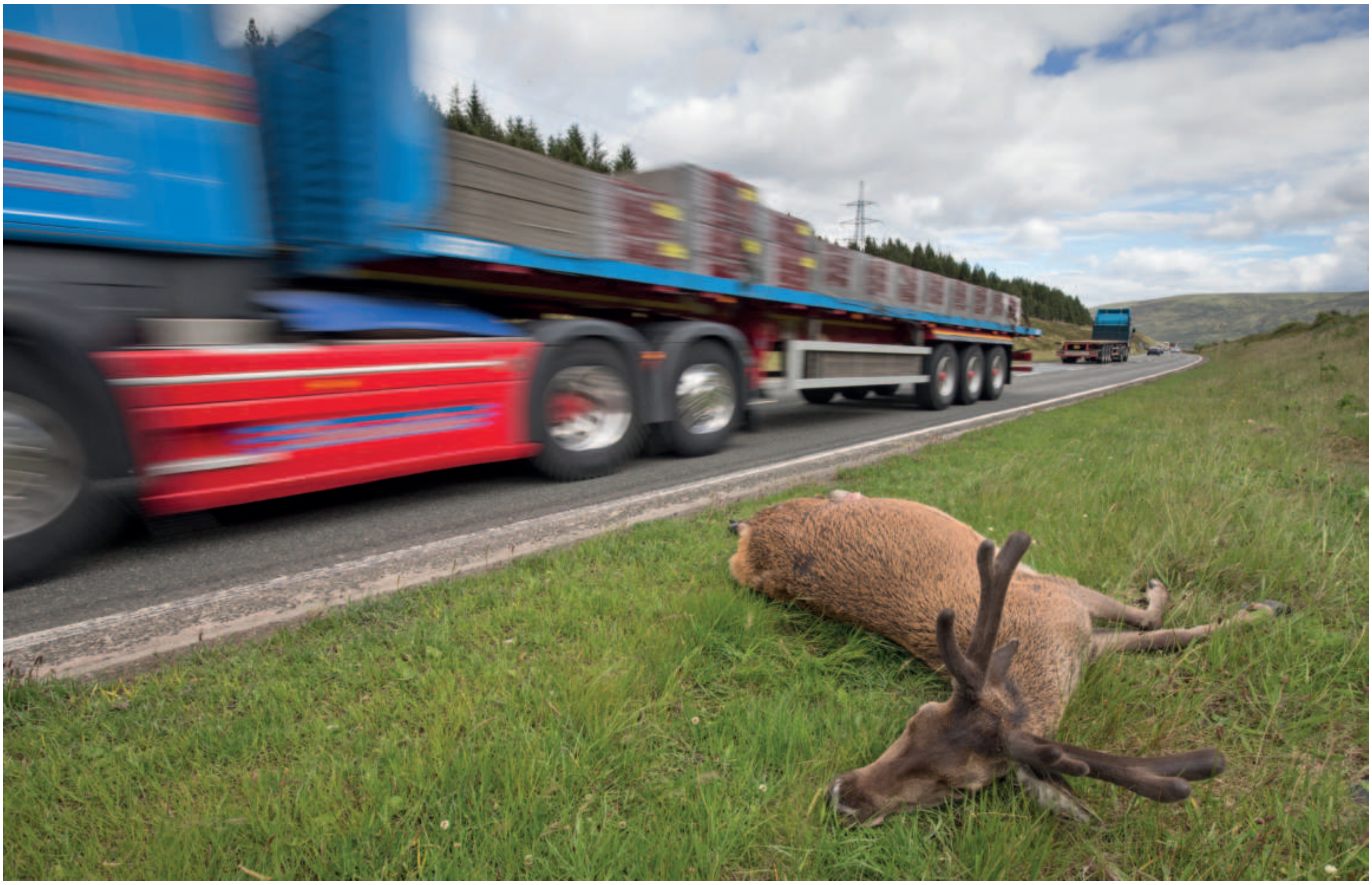
Frustrated, I started researching ecological restoration – the notion that conservation needed to move beyond protection, to a journey of regeneration and recovery. Today, that principle has evolved into rewilding.

I was commissioned to document the story of Alladale Estate in Sutherland, a 23,000-acre traditional stalking estate that had changed hands and was destined to be Scotland's first high-profile rewilding project. The word itself was still in its infancy, but the principles behind the work at Alladale struck a chord with a disillusioned photographer searching for a cause.

Despite their unquestionable beauty and drama, many of Scotland's glens, rivers and mountains have become ecological vacuums. Centuries of use and misuse means that most of the complex woodlands that once shaped the landscape are now gone. Gone too are many of the animals, while others that were once prolific now teeter on the edge. Much of Scotland, especially the uplands, lies dormant, muted, some might say dying.

Rewilding is an opportunity to restore abundance and diversity of life to Scotland's degraded ecosystems; to stitch back together

Below In order to catalyse positive action, an audience needs to understand the problem. This image has been used to make the case for wildlife bridges, or corridors, across major trunk roads to improve habitat connectivity.



a complex and colourful tapestry of life, where natural, dynamic processes shape and govern the landscape. Rewilding is about rivers, shaded by corridors of alder and willow, running as they want to, as they need to. Rewilding is about connectivity across the landscape – encouraging native woodland to expand to regulate the climate, bind the soils and provide corridors for red squirrels to move from tree to tree. Rewilding is about rewetting Scotland's peatlands that across huge areas have been drained and burned, giving them a chance to purify our water and store vast amounts of carbon.

And what about those large predators that so often hijack the rewilding conversation? There are now lynx and wolves living in France, Spain, Italy and Germany. There are now wolves living in the Netherlands, of all places. It's not that we can't live with these animals – there's food and space aplenty – it's that we refuse to, while at the same time demanding that other countries protect their large carnivores.

Ultimately, rewilding is a change in mindset, a reimagining of our relationship with nature. As Sir John Lawton said: 'We need to think bigger, better and more joined up.'

Rewilding, or landscape-scale nature recovery, is now the currency of most environmental groups and, increasingly, of policymakers. It is no longer a conversation had by maverick environmentalists (or photographers), but by mainstream society. It has matured into a solution for both climate breakdown and global nature loss, while offering a 'nature-based' solution to practical challenges such as flooding, erosion and water quality.

For the last three years, I've headed up a rewilding charity, SCOTLAND: The Big Picture (SBP). Our mission is to support and enable the transformational recovery of nature across Scotland. That mission is made more possible with our extensive use of visual imagery, allowing us to not only talk about a rewilded Scotland, but to show people what it could look like.

I've long believed that nature photographers have a unique opportunity, perhaps even an obligation, to use their images as a force for good. For me, the value of photography lies not in the image itself but how you put it to work as a communications tool – to inform, inspire and influence your audience.

Learn more at *scotlandbigpicture.com*.

Above A landscape in recovery: Glen Affric, Wester Ross, Scotland.

Left Framing wildlife imagery in a way that people can relate to is more effective than standalone 'trophy images'. In this case, a pine marten visiting someone's garden not only reflects their recovery in recent years, but suggests a growing tolerance towards species that were once vilified.

Autumn re-imagined

Given the freedom to experiment by lockdown, and determined to avoid the classics and cliches, ***Ann and Steve Toon*** *discovered a more abstract and artistic way to portray the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness. Here are their insights and tips for a poetic autumn*

When conditions align, autumn can be the best season for photography. You know the routine: head off somewhere famously scenic, where layered stands of trees decked out in russets, reds and golds provide a feast for the eyes. The vibrant colours are impossible to resist at this time of year, except for the fact that, as with any tempting dessert trolley, you can perhaps have too much of a good thing – all those toffee-coloured beeches and honeyed maples can start to seem a bit rich after a while.

There is another option. When trips to far-flung autumn hotspots were prevented by local lockdowns last year, we discovered there was more than enough inspiration for some alternative autumnal pictures on our doorstep. Few of the locations would have made it onto those popular lists of top-ten destinations for photographing autumn colour. At one point, we even found ourselves photographing our re-imagined take on autumn in mucky puddles in the lane.

The moral of our tale is simple: you don't need to travel far, or take the traditional approach, to get eye-catching pictures this season. Stunning as the popular, much-photographed scenic locations undoubtedly are, we ended up concluding that the UK's headline autumn acts had perhaps held us back in the past. We'd never needed to get past the obvious when photographing them, nor been thrown back on our own resources to find a fresh and more personal take on the season.

Our slant on autumn last year, more elegiac than celebratory, was no doubt influenced by what we were all experiencing in 2020. Autumn is often portrayed as a rather sorrowful season – the precursor to winter's bleakness, the year growing old, a time of decay and so on. In photography, we're generally more preoccupied with showcasing autumn's glorious and intense colour, so the effect is often more joyful. But last year, for obvious reasons, things were a little different.

Above **Common beech trees in autumn**
Framing this scene quite tightly helped emphasise the features that appealed to us – those bands of gold leaves against the linear pattern of tree trunks.
Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 24-105mm lens, ISO 500, 1/60sec at f/8

How much seeing our subject through the prism of a pandemic impacted on our choice of subject and framing is difficult to say, but we naturally found ourselves taking a more nuanced path. The result was that our images turned out to be more toned down, reflective and much more abstract than we'd imagined.

Without the instant gratification from standout autumn-colour locations, we were forced to tease out images from the simple subjects we had to hand. With time to spare, and no commercial agenda, we were also free to photograph whatever caught our eye, with no concern at all whether our images 'conformed' or would garner likes on social media.

FINDING FRESH INSPIRATION

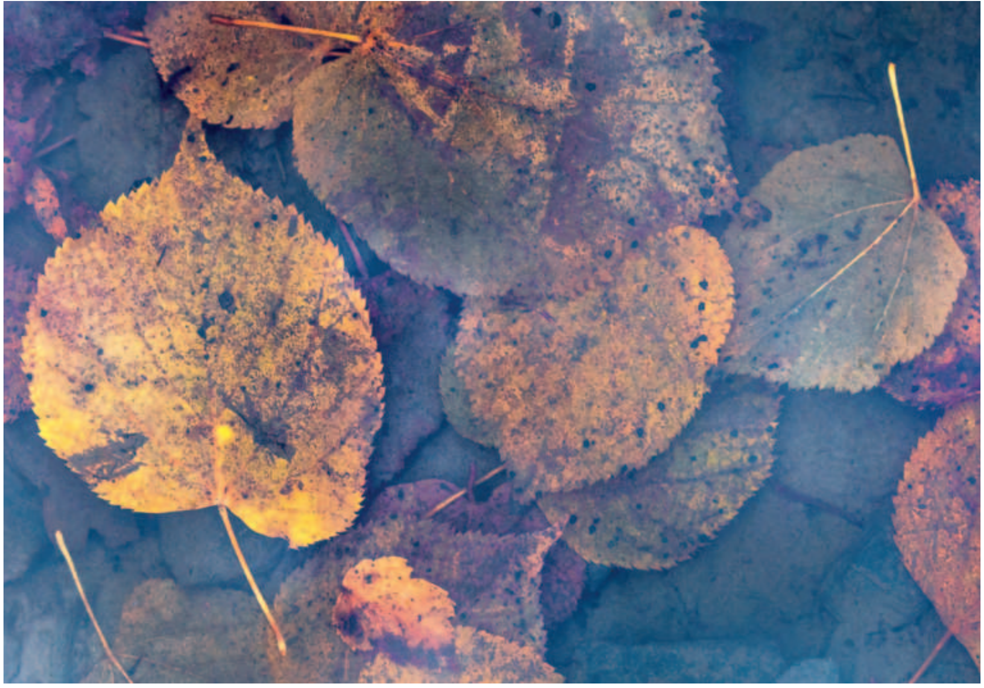
Admittedly getting started is the hardest bit, especially once you take those gorgeous but much-photographed classic landscapes off the table. But as soon as you recognise evidence of the season is all around you – consider the wonderful autumn colour you can find in the landscaped areas of urban retail parks, industrial estates and supermarket car parks, for example – you're away.

We found it easier when we confined our search to a small area. A domestic garden, a local park or tiny woodland reserve can be your starting point for a rich and rewarding autumn photography project. Truly, the possibilities are endless once you start. Just keep an open mind, switch off from the workaday, forget your mental file of 'me-too' autumn images and tune in only to what's around you. Don't worry if you can't find anything to photograph at first, or what you do photograph doesn't work – if we get one good image from a session, that's a win, and some days it doesn't happen at all.

When something does grab your attention, invest in that hunch. You'll soon get caught up photographing if there's a picture waiting to be prised out. If it isn't happening, or it seems a bit 'meh', move on and see what else draws you in.

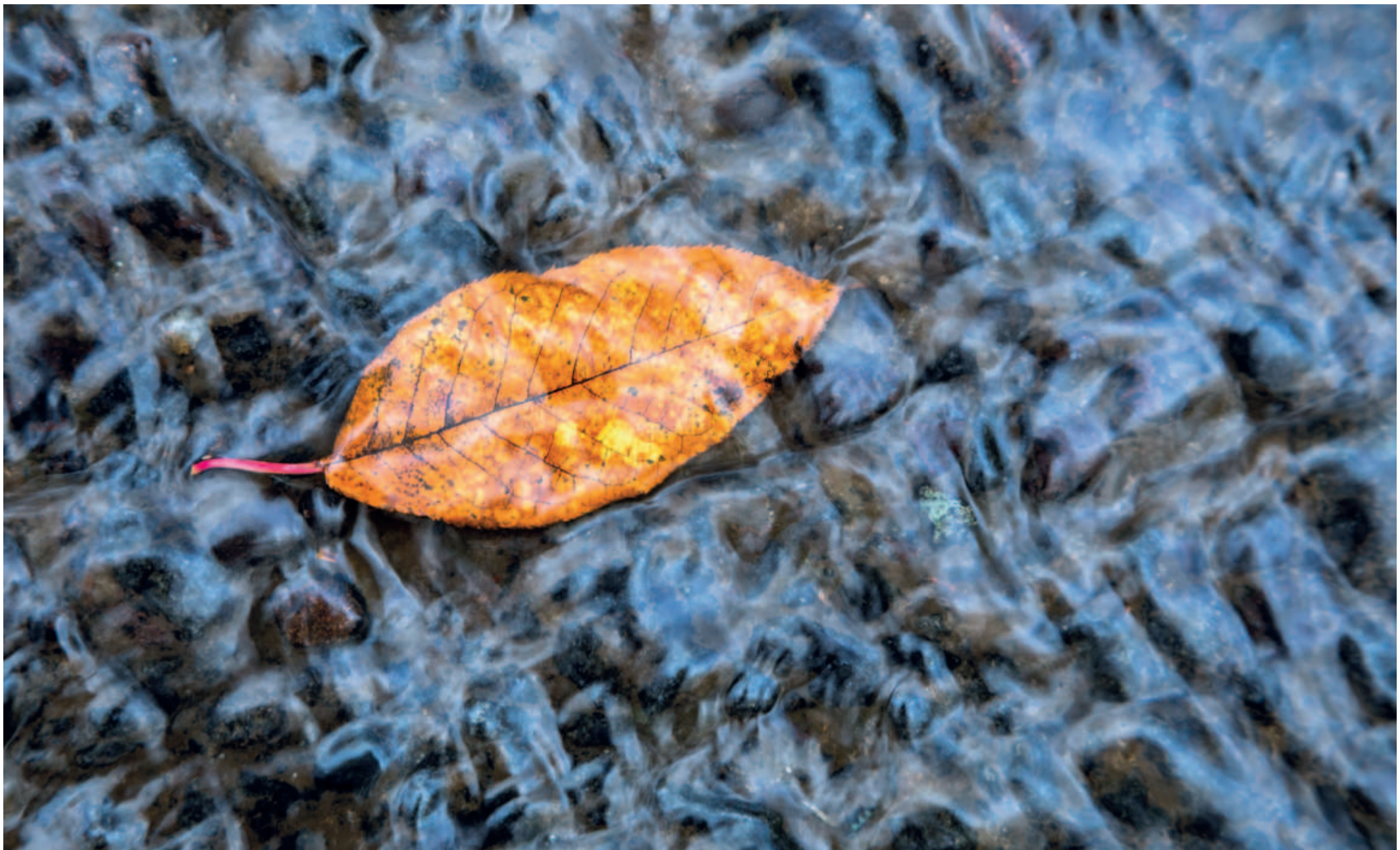
If you're struggling to find the bigger picture, home in on the detail instead. Sometimes, a single leaf is all you need to make a pleasing image. Consider what it is about a particular leaf or stand of trees that interests you, be it the shape, pattern, colour or texture, and concentrate on ways to isolate or emphasise those features. There are no rules: you can photograph a chaotic pile of fallen leaves as you find them or arrange them deliberately in the scene. For example, a shapely nut-coloured oak leaf placed for contrast on a bed of bright green moss or lichen might be your starting point for a simple still life or series.

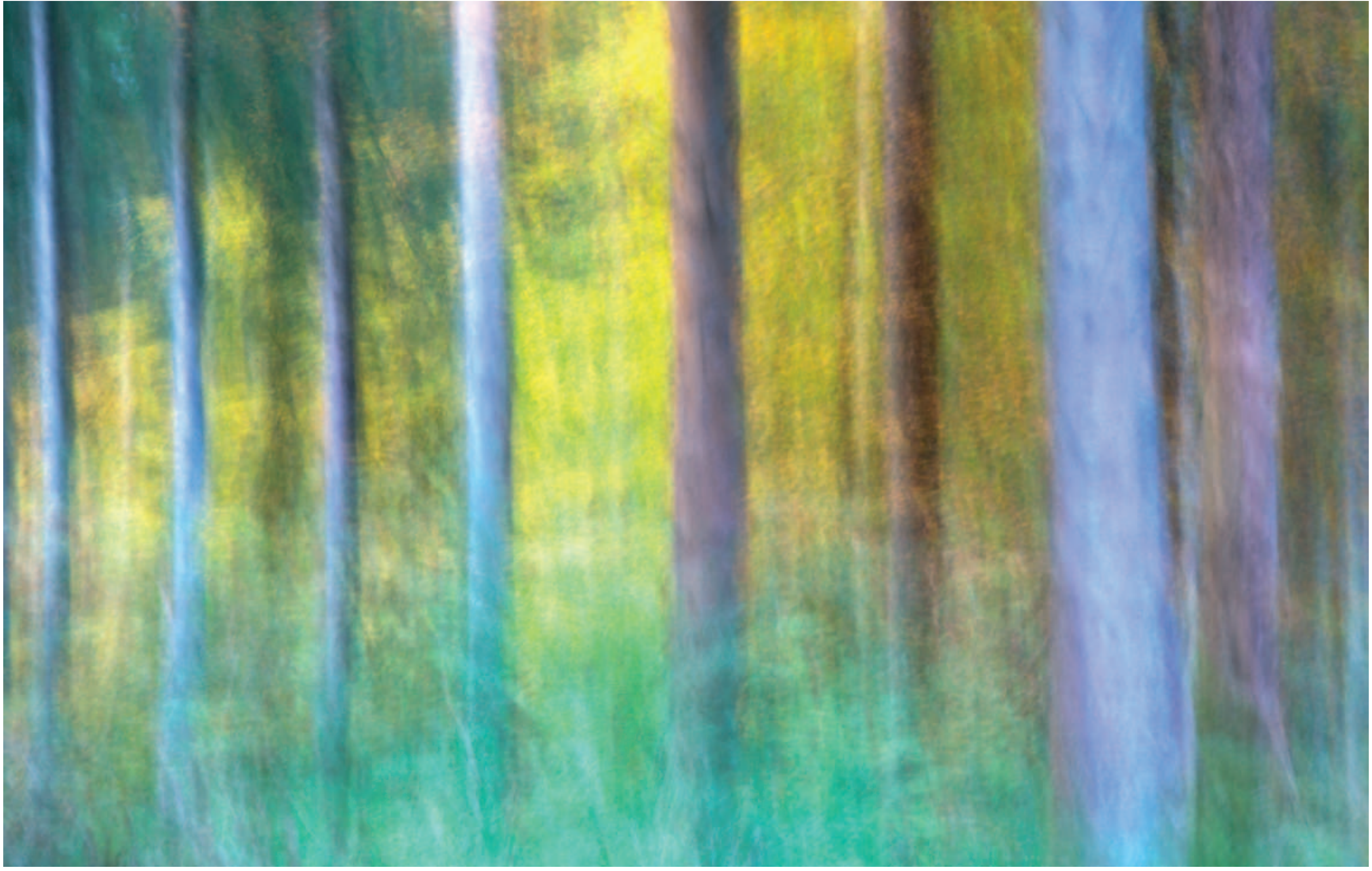
Leaf studies proved a useful way in and excellent warm-up exercise for us. From there, we looked at ways to make these straightforward compositions more visually interesting. On one occasion, following a wet spell, we got carried away photographing some fallen leaves submerged by floodwater. The water had the effect of muting the vibrant colour normally associated with the season, while its rippling patterns suggested movement and texture in our pictures. A single bronze-coloured beech under the shallow water, photographed with plenty of shutter speed to freeze the water, looked altogether different when taken at a much slower speed to blur the water completely. We quickly realised the possibilities were greater than we'd expected and that experimentation was vital if we were going to take our autumn pictures forward.



Above **Autumn leaves submerged in stream**
Looking beyond the obvious led us to consider what beauty might be found in the piles of less than pristine leaves around our feet and in puddles as here.
Canon EOS 5D MkIV with 24-105mm lens, ISO 800, 1/30sec at f/4

Below **Autumn leaf in water**
Small things can be rich in possibility, for example here where rippling floodwater gave us the chance to completely transform a simple study of a single gold leaf.
Canon EOS 5D MkIV with 24-105mm lens, ISO 400, 1/20sec at f/9





ADDING MOOD AND MEANING

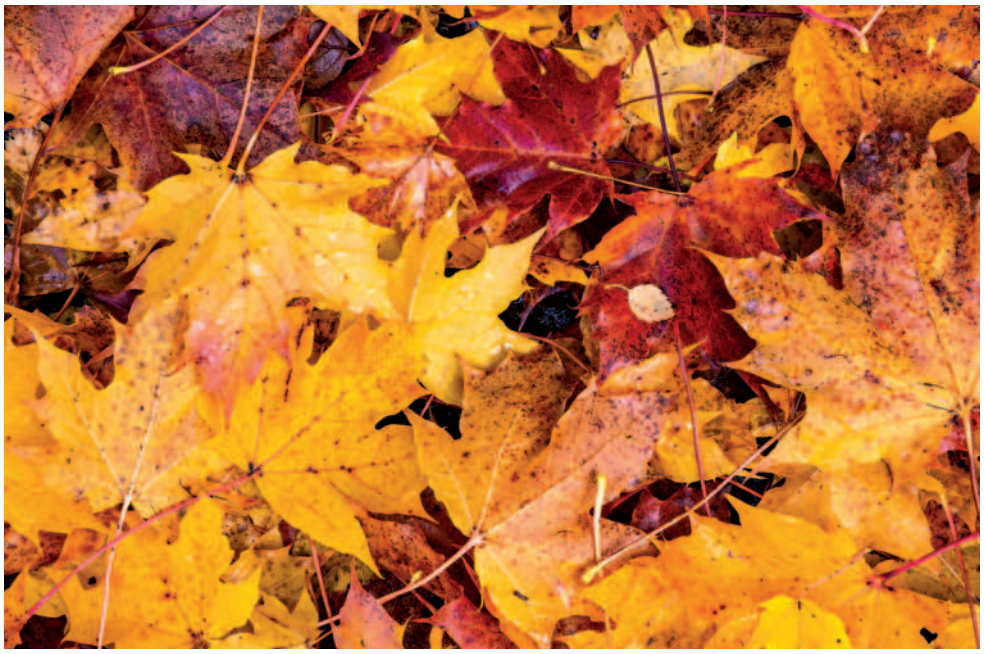
How you choose to photograph your autumn subjects can have a huge impact on the mood and meaning you convey to your audience. Harness this for deliberate effect and your images will work much harder for you. For example, suppose you want to convey the childlike pleasure you get from kicking through a pile of fallen leaves on a woodland walk. A zoom burst perhaps, twisting the lens as you photograph, which often gives pictures a powerful sense of dizzying energy, might be one approach to capture that mood. Alternatively, if your aim is instead to highlight the meditative calm of an autumnal stroll, you'll clearly need something mellower, perhaps utilising mist or a shallow depth of field to dampen contrast and softly blur large parts of your shot.

Consider meaning as well as mood. A solitary leaf clinging to an otherwise empty branch could be a metaphor for resilience or individualism. A small row of ancient beech trees might suggest resistance, unity in resolve or the strength of community. Autumn, like spring, is a season rich in associations. If you look to exploit these emotional connections through your photography, your images will resonate more powerfully with your viewer.

Above **Tree impression, Sidwood**
A very slow shutter speed and intentional camera movement vertically combine here to produce an evocative, atmospheric image of an autumnal wood.
Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 24-105mm lens, ISO 100, 5sec at f/22

Weather and light are key aids on standby to help you communicate the precise autumnal mood and message you're after. Wait to head out until conditions match what you need, be it diffused light in overcast conditions, light mist, soft drizzle, gentle breeze, low-raking sun and so on.

Your subconscious will spill over into your compositions too, of course. We found ourselves drawn to places with water: ponds, streams, a local reservoir and even tiny puddles. Despite the bright bursts of colour above our heads, we gravitated towards the fallen, decaying leaves at our feet, held in shallow puddles or caught in fast-flowing streams. They had an appealing, wistful beauty we hadn't noticed before. Perhaps our situation last autumn, trapped by lockdowns and stuck in a permanent holding pattern, played its part.



Left **Autumn leaves**
Chaotic colour and shapes characterise autumn, but try to aim for some order and a focal point when framing – for example the diagonals suggested by the leaf stems here and that tiny yellow leaf.
Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 24-105mm lens, ISO 800, 1/60sec at f/16

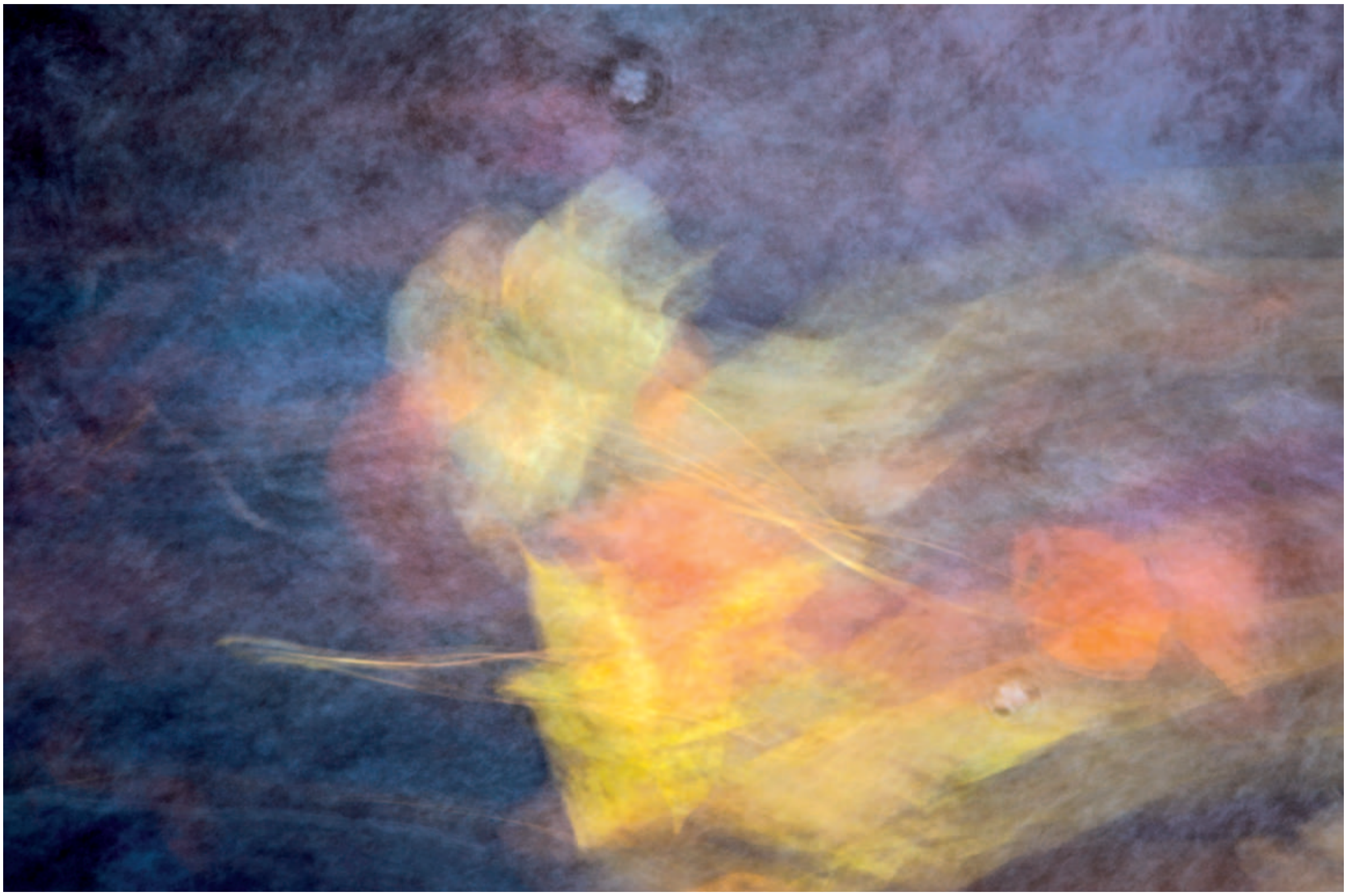
EXPLOITING IMPERFECT REFLECTIONS

There's always rich potential for reflection shots come autumn because there's the chance to double up on all that colour. Just remember that you don't have to shoot them by the book and wait for still days and mirror-like conditions. A small pond in our local wood, for example, became a vital stop on breezy days, precisely because the reflections there were dappled and distorted due to the wind-rippled tangle of reeds and weeds.

One bright afternoon, we photographed the blue sky and autumnal canopy reflected in just one small area of the pool's surface. The intricate detail of the disturbed reflection, interwoven with tall grasses and lily pads, looked for all the world like heavily embroidered damask fabric. Almost the same spot photographed a few days later, when it was overcast, looked like gossamer or soft silk. We liked the tranquil feel so much we enhanced the effect, adjusting the exposure compensation dial on the plus side by a full stop and deliberately overexposing the scene to make it more ethereal and high-key.

We discovered that it pays to go beyond the obvious when you're scouting for autumn subjects and approaches, and that really working a single location and revisiting it in different conditions can provide a rich source of varied images.

Above **Trees in Sidwood**
Towards the end of autumn nothing is left but the bones. We underexposed this image by a stop to darken the background, so the lines of the branches would stand out like an engraving. *Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 24-105mm lens, ISO 800, 1/50sec at f/16*



Autumn leaves submerged in stream Experimenting with slow shutter speeds produced some interesting, otherworldly shots of leaves floating down a stream, turning them into strange marine-like creatures *Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 24-105mm lens, ISO, 100, 2sec at f/22*

RE-WORKING THE CLASSICS

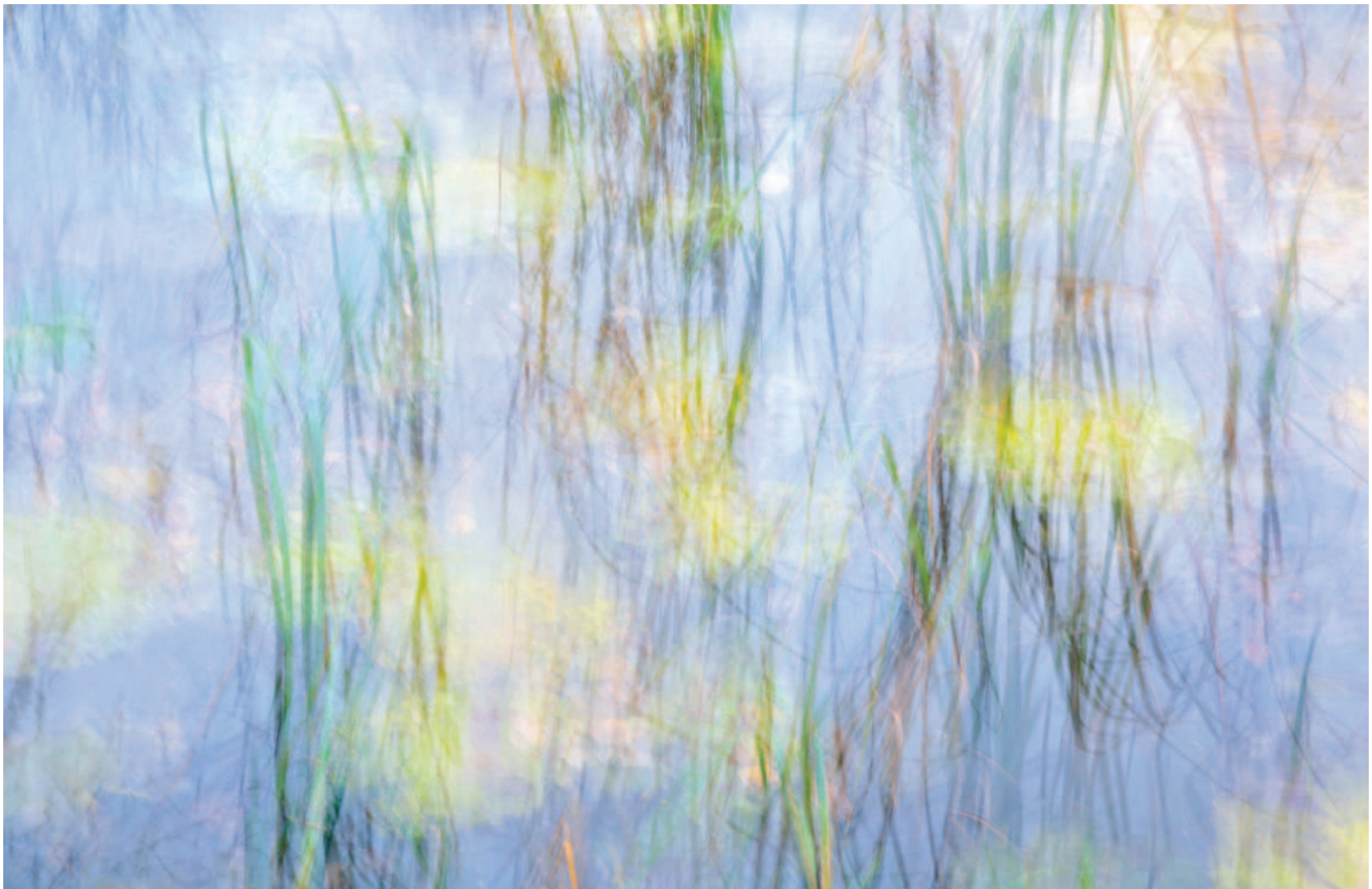
Rethinking our take on autumn wasn't just about combing the damp forest floor for details of decay, plugging into a more sombre mood or going all-out abstract – a lot of the images we made last year were straight celebrations of autumn colour. But, as ever, the challenge was to come up with something fresh. For example, the autumnal colour at a local reservoir is often quite impressive, but it's been photographed many times before. What else could we add? The answer came one morning when we woke to an extremely heavy mist. When we got there, the mist was so thick there was no autumn colour to be seen at all. Then gradually the mist slowly lifted to reveal tiny pockets of tantalising colour glimpsed through its veil. The fact that we could only see little bits of the autumn colour in our pictures was just what we wanted to draw the viewer in and make our pictures more compelling. And the mist also served us well in damping down any distracting background detail and contrast, so all the focus in our shots was on that thin slice of autumn colour and its muted reflections.

Another small but wonderful row of beech trees by the main track in our local wood delivers a knock-out blow each year and begs to be photographed when the trees are in their finery. The headache is always how to give these beautiful beeches the new twist they deserve. One option that proved very successful for us (the image was used on a postage stamp recently) was to frame them very tightly, completely cutting off the tops of the trees, so the vertical trunks provided a distinct linear pattern and design to the framing.

Have a go at re-imagining a favourite autumn landscape you often revisit during the season and see if you can find a new way to capture it. It can sometimes help you find new pictures within the scene if you swap out your wideangle lens for a medium telephoto – a 70-200mm perhaps. This will help you isolate and foreshorten those pops of strong colour that might get diluted when you shoot the wider scene.

Above **Foliage, Sidwood**
This shot was taken as the leaves began turning gold. The interplay of colours created an appealing textured effect we wanted to capture with just a hint of the branches showing through for context.
Canon EOS 5D MkIV with 100-400mm lens, ISO 800, 1/25sec at f/16

Below **Reeds in pond impression, Sidwood**
The changing reflections of autumn in a local pond provided rich inspiration. Here the scene was deliberately overexposed to make it appear softer and more dream-like.
Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 24-105mm lens, ISO 100, 1.3sec at f/20



FINDING YOUR OWN TAKE

We're really interested these days in finding different ways to portray nature subjects and how far it's possible to escape the traditions of the genre. We're quite happy switching back and forth between the representational and something more expressive when it fits with what we're trying to say. And lockdown certainly gave us complete liberty to photograph whatever and however we wanted, and for no other reason than to connect with nature and to pass the spare time we had in abundance. Without realising it, our images, often of very simple and common autumnal subjects, became more abstracted and painterly as we were drawn deeper into our project.

That was probably because we allowed ourselves to experiment. At the start, we were mainly trying more obvious stuff like using intentional camera movement (ICM) with slow shutter speeds to produce graphic and edgy images of the dense forest plantations at the edge of the woodland. We found using shutter speeds of around 1/5sec and smoothly moving the camera downwards while pressing the shutter produced some satisfying results – our photographs looked as if they'd been made with crayons or pastels rather than a camera. You could also try moving the camera side to side or round and round – you can get some totally 'out there' effects that give the autumn woodland a spooky, Halloween feel.

Later, we started getting some fascinating results using slow shutter speeds and ICM to photograph leaves floating down a little burn in the wood. The moving leaves were totally transformed by the technique we used and looked like marine creatures drifting in the ocean. Seeing these images on the LCD screen, they looked a world away from our humble woodland location. So, we kept shooting because we knew there was something there, and a little different, to be had if we worked at it. Which is why this autumn, we'll be back off there again. There are still a lot more hidden gems to be rootled out from all that leaf litter…

Above **Kielder Water and Forest Park**
Misty conditions transformed a classic, local autumnal beauty spot so we were able to put the spotlight solely on a thin, muted slice of colour as it emerged from the surrounding haze.
Canon EOS 5D MkIV with 100-400mm lens, ISO 640, 1/60sec at f/18

TEN TOP TIPS

Challenge yourself to see how many different types of autumn pictures you can make over the season from one location. It's a good way to improve your 'eye' and polish your compositional skills.

When photographing in autumn woodland, the scene can often be quite dense, tangled and busy. Instead of fighting this, embrace the feeling of chaos by trying a few in-camera multiple exposures to exaggerate the sense of complexity and convey the idea of a season in flux to your audience.

Try shooting subjects through the overhanging lacework of leafy branches (place yourself between them and the tree's trunk). You can either keep the fretwork of leaves over your image sharp and silhouetted or throw them out of focus.

Use 'bad weather' to vary and enhance the mood in your photography of the season. Colours really sing after rain, so head out and zone in on the drips that hang perilously from the points of leaves or the droplets that pattern fallen leaves.

Go out on a gusty day and shoot some longer exposures to give your images a strong sense of movement. Stick with it as not all the captures will work and it may take a while to get something satisfactory.

When you're shooting still-life pictures of vibrant leaves, whether up in the canopy or on the ground, ensure you have plenty of depth of field for sharpness throughout. It helps to photograph with your lens completely parallel to the subject where possible.

Use a very shallow depth of field to create an ethereal mood in your autumn colour studies and attract your viewer's attention to a tiny detail that's caught your imagination.

Be aware of your background at all times and select those with appealing colours that harmonise and help frame your subject, or that contrast pleasingly with it.

Invest time on subjects that grab you. It's often only by trying different viewpoints, techniques and compositions that'll you'll find the hidden picture that's lurking there.

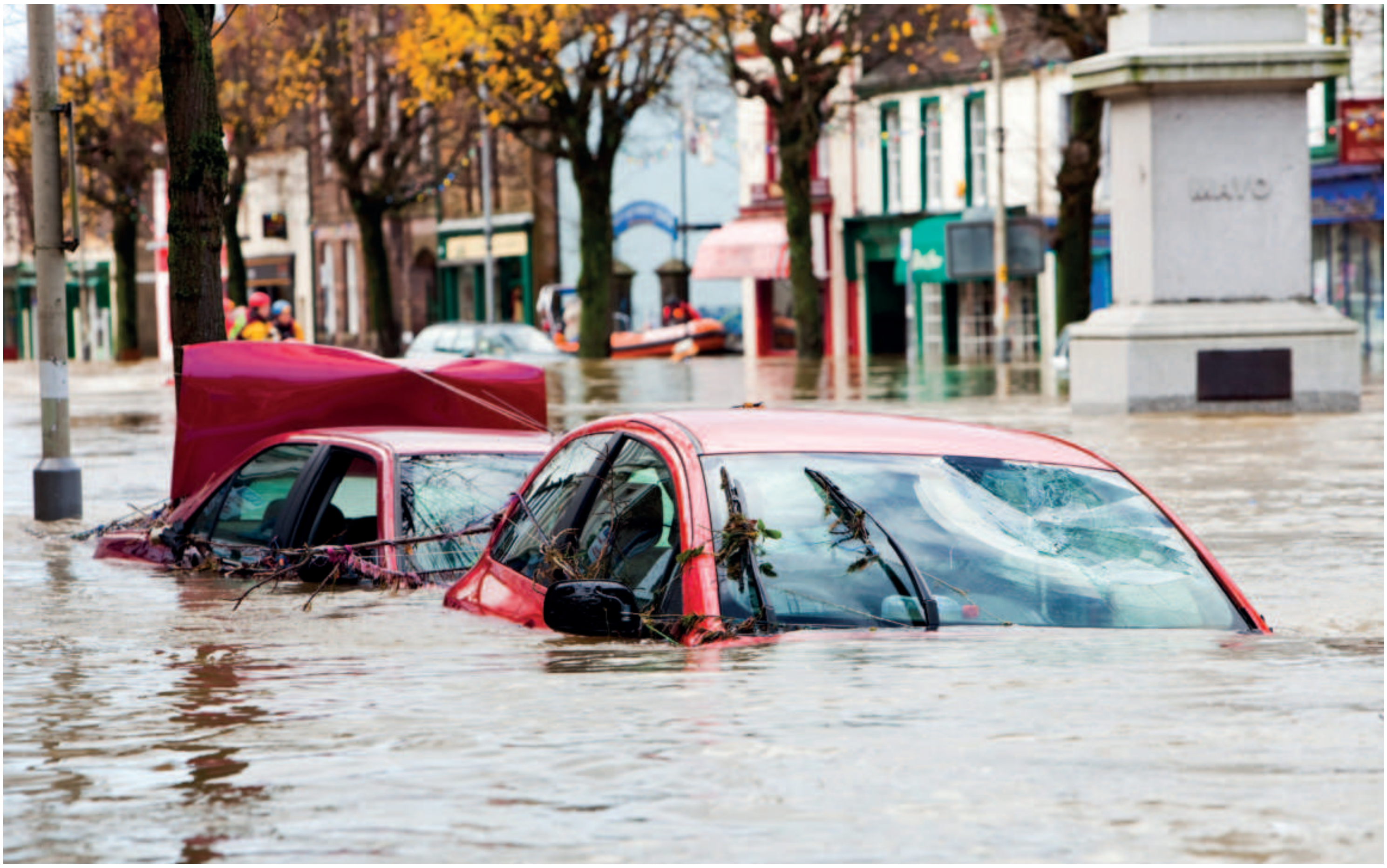
If you're photographing autumn mist, remember you can enhance the effect by dialling in exposure compensation on the plus side. The extra exposure will make the mist appear whiter and give your images a high-key feel. You can adjust at the editing stage, but it's quicker to lock in as much as you can at the capture stage.

Images from a warming planet

Environmental photographer **Ashley Cooper** *has self-published a photobook that has been seen by some of the most powerful leaders and influencers in the world. He desperately hopes it will inspire rapid decarbonisation*

I'm writing this two hours after the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its latest report, the first since 2013. The findings, based on science from around the planet, make for scary and very sobering reading. The ten main points are:

1. Compound extreme weather events are on the rise.
2. Humans' role in the climate crisis is unequivocal.
3. Every region on Earth is already affected.
4. CO_2 levels are at their highest in two million years.
5. Climate goals of 1.4°C and 2°C are slipping out of reach.
6. Strong and rapid cuts to methane needed.
7. Humans are the main driver of the worsening heat.
8. Changes to ice, oceans and sea levels will be irreversible for centuries.
9. Climate tipping points can't be ruled out.
10. Every bit of action matters.



Above **Flooding**
The main street of Cockermouth, Cumbria, UK, underwater. This Cumbrian town has been badly flooded three times, in 2005, 2009 and 2015. After 2009, the Environment Agency spent millions building new flood defences for the town. They said they would protect the town from a 'once in a 100 years' flood. Three years after they finished the defences, Storm Desmond came along and completely overtopped the new flood defences.

Sadly, this is all too familiar to me, as I have now spent 17 years documenting climate change impacts on every continent. I view all of this with a huge level of frustration, as I have been banging on about this to anyone who would listen since I returned from my very first climate change photo shoot in 2004.

At the turn of the century, I started to read more about climate change in scientific papers. As a professional environmental photographer, this sounded rather interesting, so I decided to go take a look at some of the issues. I planned a month-long shoot to Alaska to document glacial retreat, permafrost melt and increased forest fires. The highlight of the trip was spending a week on Shishmaref, a tiny island in the Chukchi sea between Alaska and Siberia and home to around 600 Inuits.

More folk climb Everest every year than visit this remote island. Its inhabitants still maintain a largely hunter-gatherer lifestyle, fishing for salmon, hunting caribou and seal, and picking berries. As such, their carbon footprint is tiny compared to your average North American citizen.

The problem was that their houses were being washed into the sea. The sea ice used to lock up their island home around late September but, even back in 2004, the sea ice wouldn't form until maybe Christmas time. This meant any large storms coming in, before the sea ice formed, just knocked large chunks out of their island and toppled their houses into the sea.

Below **Drought**
Lake Hume is the largest reservoir in Australia, set up to provide water for farms further down the Murray-Darling Basin and drinking water for Adelaide. When this photograph was taken, it was at 19.6% capacity. In the summer of 2009, it dropped to 2.1% capacity. Droughts will only worsen as a result of climate change. The last time the water was anywhere near this end of the reservoir was 10 years ago, rendering this 'no fishing' sign somewhat redundant.

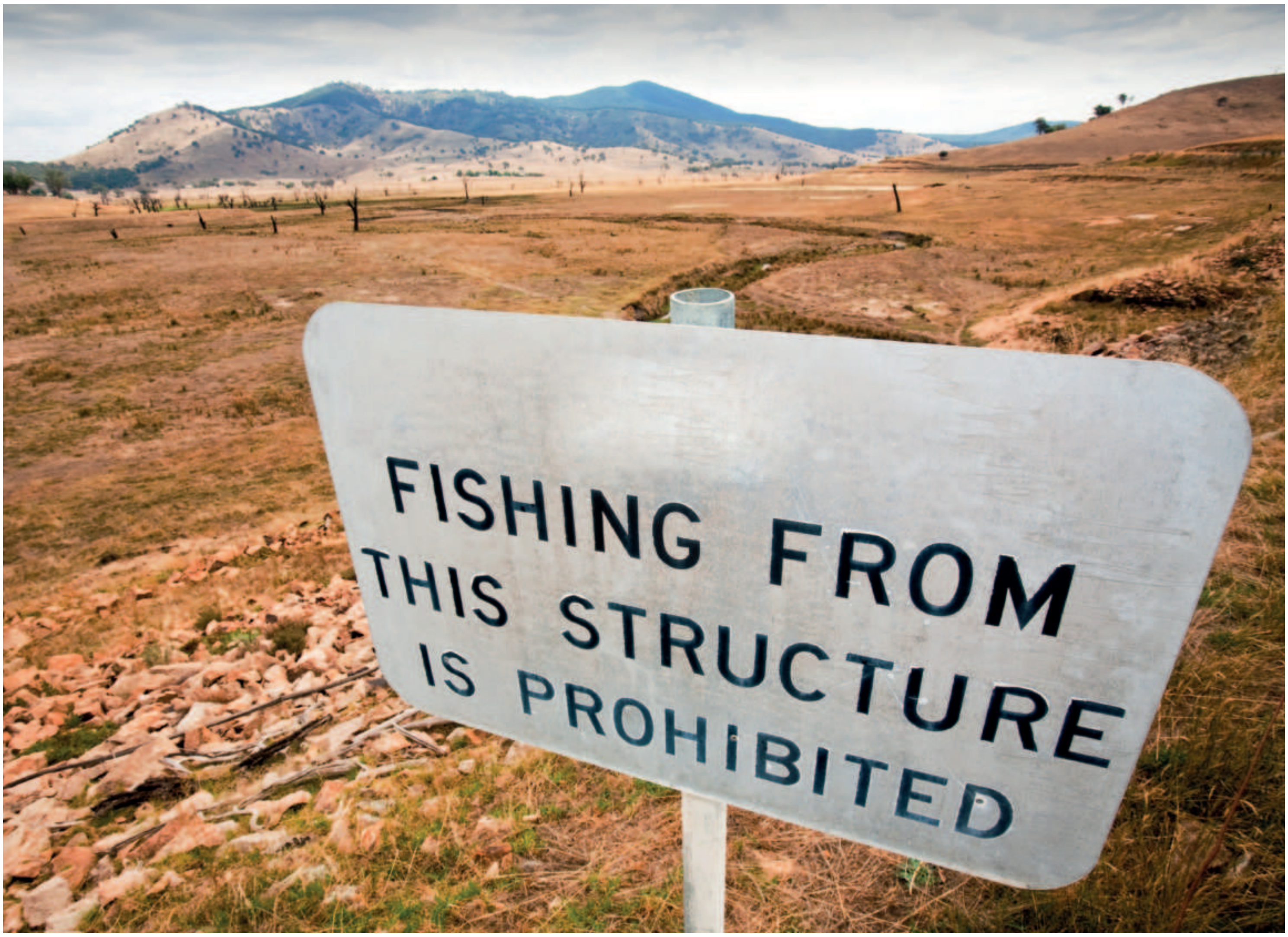
I was to learn something here that I have seen in so many places around the planet since. That is, those least responsible for climate change are most impacted by it. When I returned from Alaska, I would say around 50% of the people I talked to about what I had seen responded: 'Climate change, what's that? I've never heard of it.' Today, it would be almost impossible to get that response, as we have all heard of climate change, but sadly so far, precious little has been done by world governments to tackle the problem.

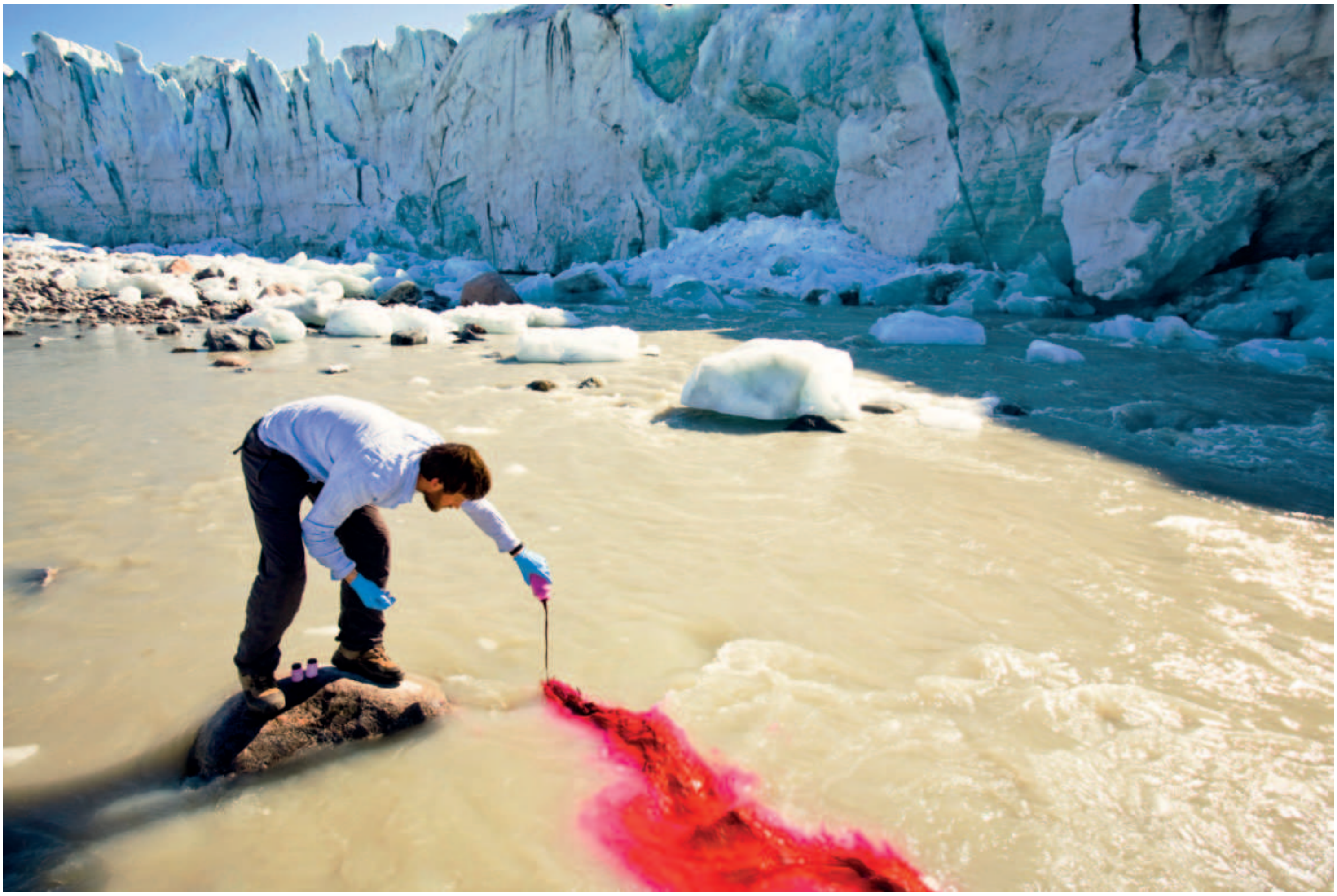
My travels took me to all seven continents, from below the Antarctic Circle, to within 400 miles of the North Pole; from 18,000ft above sea level in the Bolivian Andes, to 282ft below sea level in Death Valley. I visited over 30 countries to document extreme weather, glacial retreat, permafrost melt, sea-level rise, desertification, flooding, coastal erosion, coral bleaching, forest fires and much more. I saw far more death and destruction than I would want to remember, but I also witnessed inspiring action being taken by those trying to make a difference.

I have probably seen more climate change impacts than any other living human. Scenes of distress and destruction are always difficult to witness, but I felt that it was vital that the greatest threat that humanity has ever faced was documented. It was something of an uphill struggle, as the entire project was self-funded through image sales into books, newspapers, magazines and TV.

Some years into the project, I launched a photo library, Global Warming Images, and at the end of it all, I crowdfunded £45,000 to self-publish a photobook. *Images from a Warming Planet* contains 500 of the most powerful images from the entire journey. Environmentalist Jonathon Porritt called it 'An extraordinary collection of images and a powerful call to action'. I have tried to get

> *'Many of climate change's destructive patterns are now locked into the system and will continue to get worse with every passing year.'*





the book to world leaders and influencers, as I passionately believe there is power in the images. So far, the book has reached Pope Francis, Prince Charles, Al Gore, Sir David Attenborough, Emmanuel Macron, Sir Tim Smit, Bill McKibben, Emma Thompson, Chris Packham, Nicola Sturgeon, Vivienne Westwood and many more.

We are rapidly running out of time. Many of climate change's destructive patterns are now locked into the system and will continue to get worse with every passing year, if we keep on with the business as usual scenario. The only chance we now have to save ourselves, and all the other amazing species we share this planet with, is to rapidly decarbonise.

We need COP26 to be the moment that humanity decides to save itself. We need all world governments to commit to rapid and binding reductions in carbon emissions. Fossil fuels need to be kept in the ground. All companies need to take carbon out of their business model, and as citizens we all have a responsibility to reduce our own carbon footprints. Only then may we stand a chance of avoiding the worst impacts of catastrophic climate change.

The most obvious signs of climate change, extreme weather events, are on the increase in both frequency and ferocity, so I have chosen images that depict flooding and drought, the two extremes of our changing rainfall patterns. The entire project was driven by the science, so I felt it was important to highlight the critical work that climate scientists undertake, often in remote and dangerous locations.

A Moment with Nature, page 76

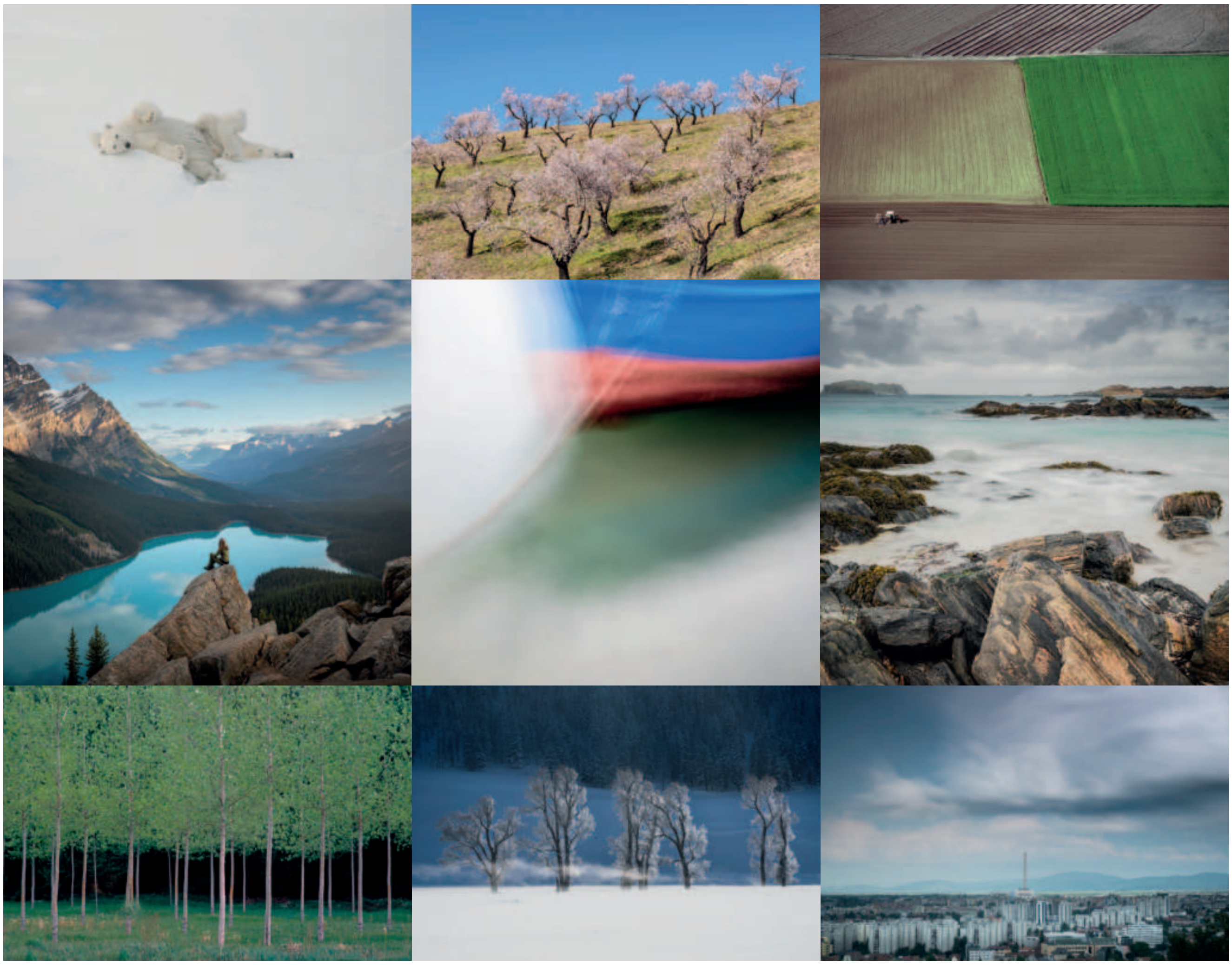
Above **Science**
PhD scientist Ian Bartholomew using dye-tracing techniques as part of a study to measure the speed of the Russell Glacier near Kangerlussuaq, Greenland. The study is looking at how increasing quantities of melt water caused by climate change are affecting the glacier's speed, which like most glaciers in Greenland has sped up considerably in the last 20 years. As part of the study, reflective poles were drilled 4m into the ice to measure their speed at various positions on the glacier. Within a month, all the poles had fallen over as the glacier melted. The study conclusively showed that the speed of the glacier was directly linked to the amount of meltwater draining from its snout.

ASHLEY COOPER
IMAGES FROM A WARMING PLANET

Ashley Cooper has teamed up with *Outdoor Photography* to offer readers a very special price on *Images from a Warming Planet*. If you would like to purchase a signed copy for £25 plus P&P (the book retails at £40), please email ashley@globalwarmingimages.net quoting *Outdoor Photography Magazine*.

Find out more at *imagesfromawarmingplanet.net.*

> *'The only chance we now have as a species to save ourselves, and all the other amazing species we share this planet with, is to rapidly decarbonise.'*



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LIGHT & LAND

Joshua Elphick

*Award-winning, 18-year-old **Joshua Elphick** is already making his mark on the landscape photography scene. Nick Smith puts him in the spotlight*

Nick Smith: **At this early stage in your career, how would you categorise yourself?**
Joshua Elphick: That's a difficult one. I'd probably class myself as a landscape photographer, but I wouldn't want to restrict myself to that in the traditional sense. I'm not always looking for amazing light, scene or subject in the way some other photographers do. I really enjoy shooting what some might think is quite mundane or everyday, but then making it into something.

NS: **What's the process behind this?**
JE: At the moment, I'm mainly shooting on 35mm film – although I use digital a lot – and that brings things back to my way of looking at subjects, which is simply to have my camera with me when I'm out and about and just composing normal stuff. This was a kind of retro thing at the start because I was interested in film. While studying photography at East Sussex College, I started using the darkroom. This seemed very different to me and something I'd never done before. To be honest, it was on this course that it all really started to happen for me.

NS: **Why did you pick up a camera in the first place?**
JE: It mainly started with filmmaking – my diploma is in filmmaking and photography – to record the extreme sports that I'm into. And I've always been interested in documentary and video, which is why I picked up my first camera, which was actually my phone. But then I'd look at professional photos in magazines and think that they were cool, and that's what led me to choose to do photography at college. But I didn't pick up a proper camera until I was 16.

NS: **You're the current Young Landscape Photographer of the Year...**
JE: Looking back now, I've got no idea why I even entered the competition. I'd only been doing photography for a year! But I've always been told by everyone to 'just put yourself out there', and that's what I did. Obviously, I had no idea I'd even be shortlisted, but I just decided to give it a shot. It was quite a surprise.

NS: **What happens after such an early success?**
JE: Well, something that I've learned is that you can't go out expecting to shoot an award-winning photograph every time you leave the house. There's no need to put that

Counting sheep

Summer swell

Beachy Head Lighthouse

Lone surfer

pressure on yourself, especially when you're looking for subjects that are perhaps a bit more on the mundane side and trying to build something interesting out of that.

NS: **What do you think makes a great outdoor photograph?**
JE: I like it when photographers have an identifiable style, when an image seems to contain some personality and you can look at their work and narrow it down to who you think it might be by. I also like the idea that the photographer has shot an image with real enthusiasm rather than because they have to. For it to be real, I always think that you don't 'take' the photo, but 'make' it.

NS: **Why do you choose the landscape as your subject?**
JE: I'm crazy about the outdoors. This is something I owe to my granddad, who had woods behind his house. We'd be out there all the time building fires. We even made a zip wire! So, I've always been an outdoor person.

Joshua's top tips

One thing I never go on a shoot without is...
Crisps. I'm known as a bit of a snacker, so I'll take some crisps with me to keep me going.

My one piece of advice would be to...
Don't put too much pressure on yourself and don't be afraid to shoot everyday subjects.

Something I try to avoid is...
Stressing too much about kit. Just take a camera and go shooting.

NS: **Did the lockdowns affect your progress as a photographer?**
JE: Well, 2020 just didn't happen and it's hard to remember anything important that happened during that time.

NS: **Do you think you'll make photography your future career?**
JE: I've definitely got the bug, but I think that it might be a hard industry to make it in as a full-time job.

I'm going to keep taking photos forever, even if it it's just as a side thing or a hobby, but it's early days and I'll see where it goes.

Over Watergate Bay

Joshua's critical moments

To see more of Joshua's work, visit joshelphick.com

2019 Picked up first camera and started shooting
2019 Filmmaking and photography diploma at East Sussex College
2019 Acquired first 'proper' DSLR camera
2019 First experiments with 35mm film and darkroom techniques
2020 Winner of Young Landscape Photographer of the Year competition
2021 Solo exhibition in waiting room of Burgess Hill railway station

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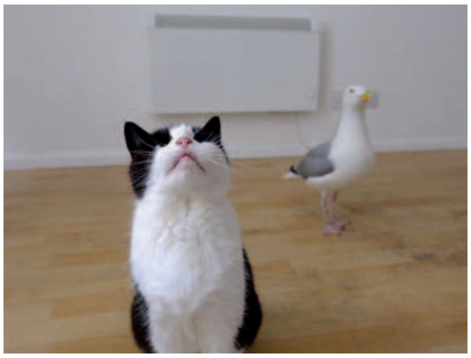

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Hooray for herring gulls

How refreshing to read about someone standing up for herring gulls (*OP* 271). Like Nick Smith I am amazed at the intelligence and beauty of these birds.

I live near the coast and I'm happy to see them every day. One gull in particular worked out that if my back door was open he could wander in through to the kitchen and help himself to my cat's food. If the door was closed, he'd politely knock with his beak. Eventually he took to queueing up with my cat for treats!

Linda Kennedy

Uninvited opinions

I have been an amateur wildlife photographer for the last seven years and have recently taken early retirement, enabling me to spend more time pursuing my photographic interests. So, I recently invested in a full-frame DSLR and 150-600mm zoom.

Previously, I was able to pursue my hobby, using a bridge camera, in relative peace, receiving the odd comment from passers-by such as, 'Have you seen anything interesting?' or, 'A kingfisher has just been spotted on the river'. However, I now feel anxious using my kit in public, due to some people who seem to take pleasure in poking fun at women with long lenses. This not only happens when I'm alone, but also when I'm with my female friend who has the same lens. From, 'Oh look, girlies with long lenses'; 'That's huge'; 'That looks heavy'; and 'You must get camera shake with that'; to giggles and whispers. Such comments border on harassment, particularly as I have never heard such comments directed at male photographers.

I was wondering just how common this is, and whether any of your other female readers have experienced the same?

Sharon Painter

***OP* says:** *We are sorry to hear of your experience, Sharon. Nobody should have to put up with this in 2021. Like you, we would be interested to hear from anyone else who has been subjected to similar comments that inhibit their photographic enjoyment.*

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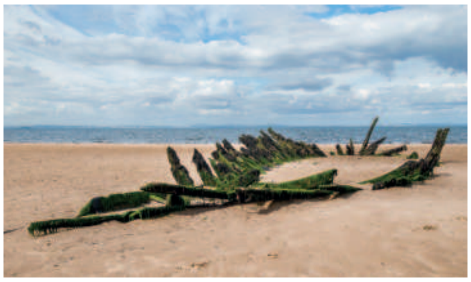

Location, location, location

As a resident of Longniddry, East Lothian, for 35 years, I was excited to see Longniddry Bents featured on page 52 of issue 271, in the Locations Guide. Unfortunately, the image is definitely not Longniddry Bents.

'The Bents', as they are referred to locally, are the bent timbers which form the ribs of a long-abandoned boat which can be seen in my attached image. They are closest to the westernmost beach car park at Longniddry and are fully visible at low tide.

I suspect that the image you used is the bridge to Aberlady Bay Local Nature Reserve east of Aberlady village, some five miles from Longniddry – an area worthy of a viewpoint of its own.

Keith Sanders

***OP* says:** *Thank you for highlighting this, Keith, and apologies to Brian Nicholson who submitted the viewpoint. While the text describes Longniddry Bents, the picture shows the bridge to nearby Aberlady Bay Local Nature Reserve. We are sorry for any confusion caused by our mistake.*

Roadside photography

How often do you see images from a disabled photographer published in *OP*? I'm a landscape photographer but can only walk a few metres with sticks and then need to be in a wheelchair. Being over 70 and disabled meant a large part of 2020 was spent shielding, and then having to be very careful over social distancing. Consequently, I now spend most of my photography time visiting locations where I can take images from the car or standing a few steps away from it. This is a challenge!

Susan Rowe

Derwent Reservoir. © Susan Rowe

***OP* says:** *Luckily there are some amazing views to be enjoyed from the roadside in the UK and beyond, as your images prove, Susan. Sometimes, being constrained in some way can encourage us to think more creatively, and we hope you enjoy the challenges this brings. We're sure there are other readers who can relate to your experience, or who are restricted in terms of being able to access locations – we'd love to hear from you...*

LETTER OF THE MONTH

This month's letter of the month winner, Linda Kennedy, receives a pair of Keela Extreme Gloves worth £49.95.

Featuring Primaloft insulation, Keela's Extreme Gloves are close-fitting, flexible and well insulated to keep you warm and dry during any activity. They feature an elasticated wrist, Grip Palm, touchscreen fingers and soft nose wipe – perfect for cold days in the mountains.

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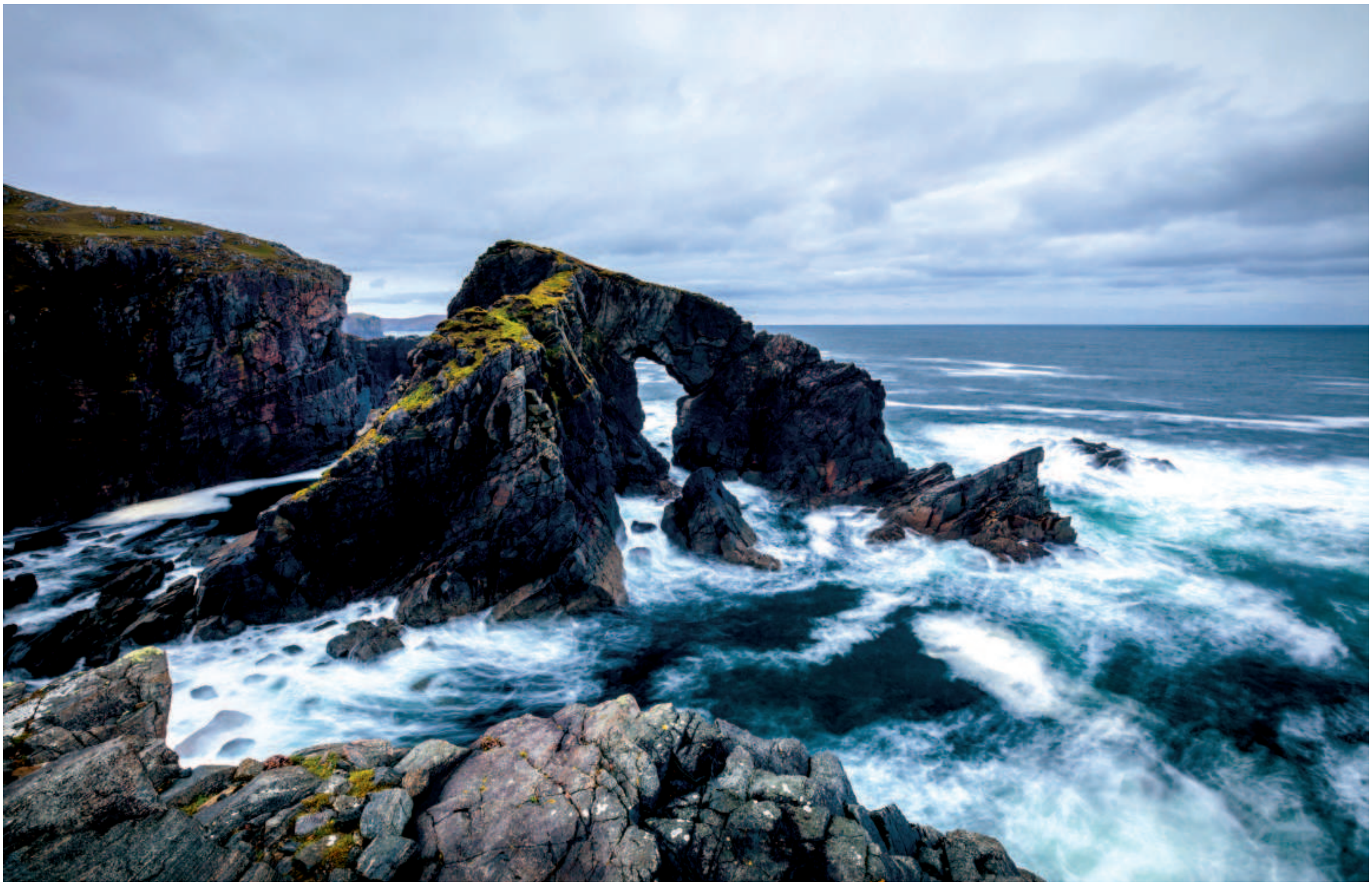
Photographing in the Outer Hebrides

*In the first of a new series, we take a closer look at some of the best places to shoot across the country. This month, **Jeremy Flint** shares his tips and recommendations for photographing in a very special part of the UK*



Stac a' Phris sea arch, Isle of Lewis

The Outer Hebrides is one of the most beautiful and idyllic places in Britain. This remote island chain, located in the north-west corner of Scotland, contains some of the most spectacular sights in the British Isles, especially the conjoined islands of Lewis and Harris. These most northerly inhabited isles in the Outer Hebrides are rich in history and heritage, landscapes and landmarks, offering photographers an abundance of opportunities. From stunning coastlines and incredible scenery to amazing wildlife and impressive ancient standing stones, a diversity of attractions awaits visitors.

The lie of the land is particularly impressive. The landscape on Harris is distinctly rugged and mountainous, while Lewis, to the north, is flatter and composed of low, open moorland dotted with hamlets and villages. The opulent Hebridean landscape pays homage to a traditional form of farming known as crofting – farming on a small scale – adding to the richness of the natural environment.

In terms of accessibility, the inland scenery is accessible by foot and there are some great walks available. One of the best is the climb up Clisham (An Cliseam in Gaelic); at 2,621ft it is the highest peak in the Outer Hebrides.

The coastal landscapes here are spectacular, particularly on the west coast of Harris where you will find stunning beaches, such as Luskentyre and Seilebost, which have huge expanses of white sand, impressive sand dunes and large areas of machair.

Sea loch, Isle of Harris

Highland cows on the Isle of Harris

Where to shoot

Stac a' Phris

After experiencing the wonder of the beaches, the coastal areas of the Outer Hebrides offer visitors a plethora of natural wonders to photograph. The north-west coastline of the Isle of Lewis is a good place to start, and my first recommendation of locations to shoot is Stac a' Phris, a striking natural sea arch. The shoreline here is amazing, with stunning rock formations and impressive sea views.

Mangersta stacks

The coastline around Mangersta on the western fringes of Lewis is equally spectacular. While the journey from Uig to Mangersta offers photographers stunning views along this stretch of coastline, the highlight is undoubtedly the incredible Mangersta stacks. These jagged peaks jut out of the sea like jewels in the ocean, with impressive sea cliffs and ocean views beyond. The stacks can look great at any time of the year, especially during dramatic weather. In autumn and winter there is usually a strong swell when the waves can crash up to the height of the stacks.

Callanish Stones

My next recommended place to shoot has to be the iconic Callanish Stones, an extraordinary landmark located on the west side of the Isle of Lewis. These spectacular standing stones, erected some 5,000 years ago, provide a truly captivating sight and even give England's world-renowned Stonehenge a run for its money in terms of beauty. There are also stone rows connected to the circle, a giant 4.8m high central stone and two other stone circles in the area. It is also well worth visiting the nearby Iron Age broch of Carloway and the Blackhouse at Arnol.

Northton salt flats

The Northton salt flats, on the south-western tip of Harris, is an area of coastal land that is regularly covered by the tide. This is one of the best saltings in the Outer Hebrides and offers some of its finest views. It is easily missed, as the low-lying grasslands are invisible during high tide. But when the water recedes, a landscape of saltmarshes and meandering channels is revealed. This is a great subject to photograph with the island of Taransay in the distance.

Rodel

Another great location to shoot is the beautiful area of Rodel, positioned at the southern edge of Harris. Here you will find unparalleled views of sea lochs, rocky headlands and the medieval St Clement's Church. From here, you can take the scenic Golden Road to Tarbert along the south-east coast for more epic sea views.

Through the seasons

Nature takes on its own character through the year. Colourful wildflowers sweep across the landscape in spring, while brown and golden hues develop during autumn as the foliage changes colour. In the winter months the lighting can be spectacular as the sun carves a lower arc through the sky and the hills are laden with snow, adding more impact to the stunning scenery.

Wildlife

The Outer Hebrides is a haven for wildlife. Golden eagles can be spotted over the coastline and mountains, while red deer roam the peaty moorlands. Photographers can also expect to see otters swimming in sea lochs, and there's a chance of spotting basking sharks, minke and killer whales. Hardy Highland cows are fairly widespread on Harris and may be encountered on unfenced roads. The islands are renowned for their breeding seabirds.

Tips and advice

The weather can be wild and unpredictable here, and the ground is often sodden in the moorlands, so dress appropriately and be sure to bring a map, compass and plenty of supplies if you are heading into the hills. Also, take great care on rocky ledges and hilltops, especially in adverse weather as high waves and winds can be treacherous.

Beyond Lewis and Harris, you can visit Uist and Barra, the other islands in the Outer Hebrides chain located to the south and accessible by ferry.

Mangersta stacks, Isle of Lewis

The Callanish Stones, Isle of Lewis

Northton saltings, Isle of Harris

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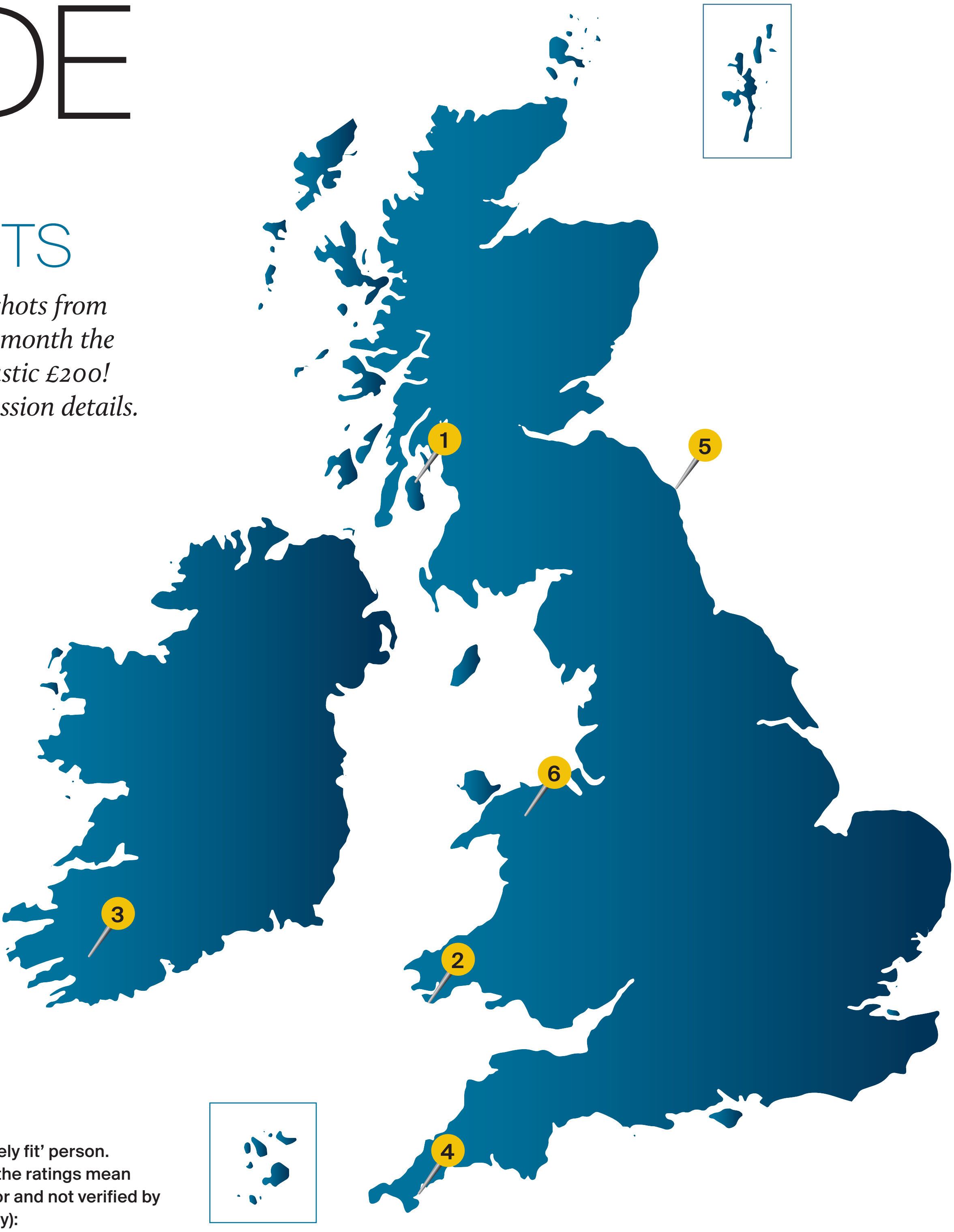
LOCATIONS GUIDE

VIEWPOINTS

We want to see your best shots from around the country. Each month the winner will receive a fantastic £200! Turn to page 70 for submission details.

1. **Caisteal Abhail**
   Isle of Arran
2. **Elegug Stacks**
   Pembrokeshire
3. **Gougane Barra lake**
   County Cork
4. **Pendennis Point**
   Cornwall
5. **Bamburgh beach**
   Northumberland
6. **Llynnau Mymbyr**
   Conwy



ACCESS RATING

These are based around an 'averagely fit' person. Below are loose guidelines to what the ratings mean (N.B. they are assigned by the author and not verified by *OP*. Walk distances are one-way only):

1/5 Easy access. You can pretty much get straight out of your car and quickly be at the viewpoint via good quality paths.

2/5 Gentle walking is involved, which may be on mixed quality paths.

3/5 Medium length walk of up to about two miles, over quite easy terrain.

4/5 Longer length hike up to about four miles over mixed terrain, possibly with some quite steep gradients.

5/5 The most difficult access. Long hike over challenging terrain (e.g. mountains/summits/steep coastal terrain); or involves travelling over particularly extreme ground (e.g. scrambling on rocks/exposed coastal paths or mountain ridges) over any distance.

VIEWPOINTS

WINNER

Scott Cameron Wanstall

theayrshirephotographer.com

Caisteal Abhail, Isle of Arran

One of the four gleaming jewels in Arran's crown is a mountain named Caisteal Abhail. This particular summit boasts one of the greatest mountain landscapes to be found in Scotland – the views are the epitome of mountain grandeur: serrated summit profiles, sprawling ridgelines and vast, crag-lined granite buttresses with a 360° coastal backdrop.

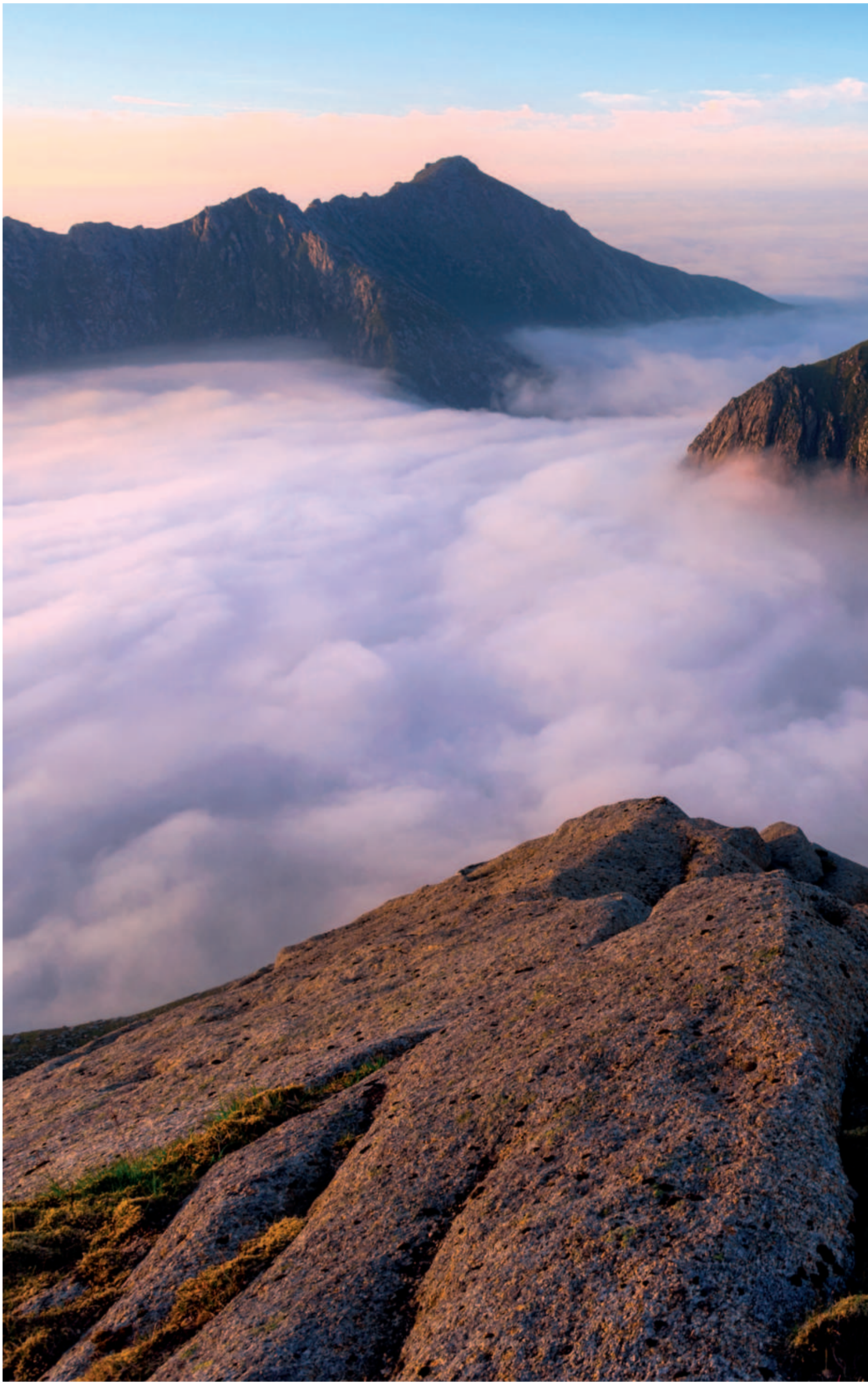
How to get there: The easiest route on to Caisteal Abhail is via North Glen Sannox on a well-constructed walkers' trail. Ford the river at the head of the trail where the route becomes steeper until the summit of Sail an Im is reached. Follow the trail up and along the corrie rim to the summit of Caisteal Abhail.
What to shoot: Grand mountain vistas, deep corries and panoramic views of western Scotland.
Other times of year: Excellent views can be enjoyed all year round.
Nearby locations: Cìr Mhòr (1 mile); Lochranza Castle (10 miles).

WIN £200!

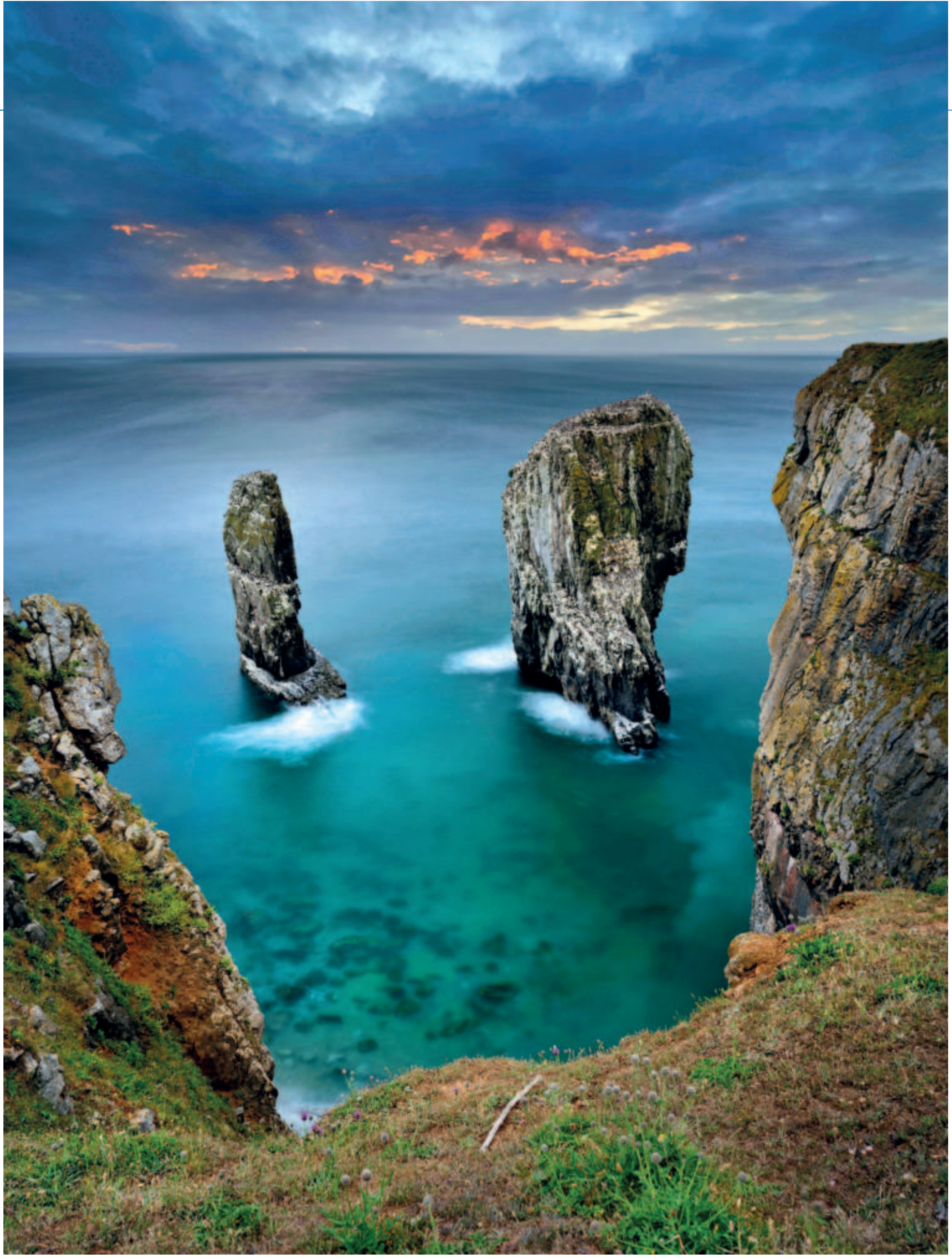
We want to see your pictures of great photography locations around the UK and Ireland. The best Viewpoint of the Month will win £200. See page 70 for details.

Congratulations!

Scott Cameron Wanstall receives £200 for his stunning photograph!



Distance: 10 miles from Brodick • 55 miles from Glasgow ACCESS RATING



John Cuthbert

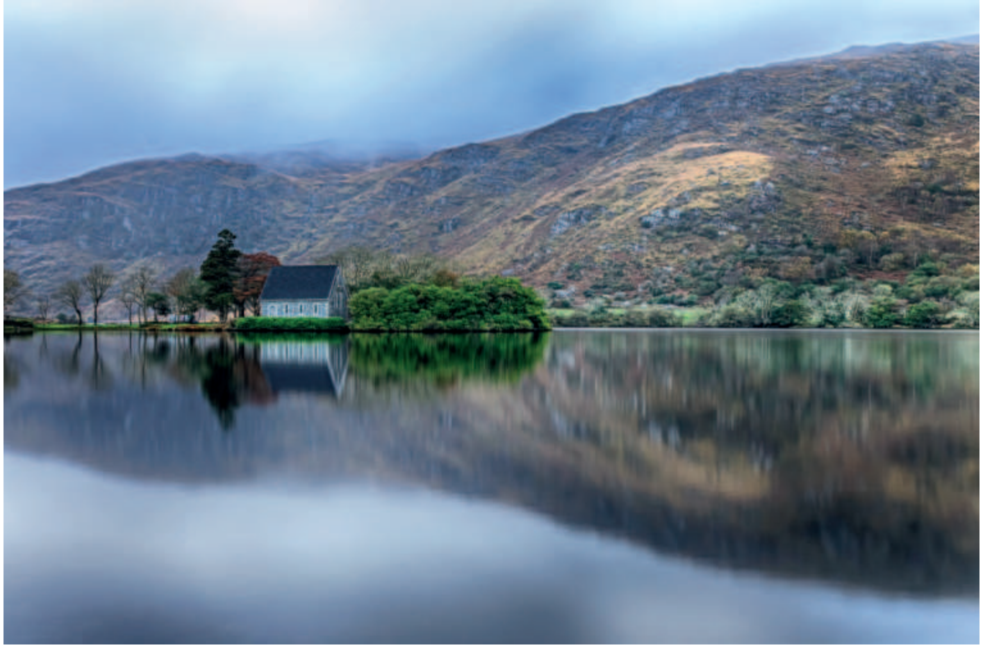
facebook.com/john.cuthbert.963

Elegug Stacks, Pembrokeshire

The Elegug Stacks, also called Stack Rocks, are situated just to the east of the Green Bridge of Wales limestone arch. These two detached pillars are a dramatic feature of the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, a spectacular 186-mile national trail, mostly at clifftop level. It is a truly stunning location for seascape scenery and wildlife.

How to get there: The Green Bridge of Wales and Elugug stacks are in the Castlemartin military training area just beyond the car park beside the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, near Saint Govan's Chapel. There is a three-mile walk west along the path to reach the stacks. ***Important!*** Please check the range is open before travelling as it is a live firing range and closed to the public at times.
What to shoot: Dramatic rocky outcrops, sea life, rare fauna and this is a bird photographer's paradise.
Other times of year: The site offers so much all year round and sunset and sunrise can be truly magical.
Nearby locations: Huntsman's Leap (1.5 miles); West Angle Bay (10 miles).

Distance: 7 miles from Pembroke • 37 miles from Carmarthen ACCESS RATING ●●●●○



Todor Tilev *todortilev.com*

Gougane Barra lake, County Cork

The name Gougane Barra means 'the rock of Barra' – Barra being Saint Finbarr, who is said to have built a monastery on an island in the lake after defeating a serpent tormenting the local people. The present church, dating from the 19th century, is a highly popular location for wedding photography. But I think it is equally suited to shooting some beautiful landscapes.

How to get there: From Cork, take the N22 west. After about 20 miles take the R584 to Ballingeary. Continue for another three miles, then take the left on the L4643 to Gougane Barra.
What to shoot: Lake, mountains and picturesque church.
Other times of year: All year round.
Nearby locations: Gougane Barra Forest (1.5 miles); Priest's Leap (13 miles).

Distance: 12 miles from Ballylickey • 41 miles from Cork ACCESS RATING ●●○○○

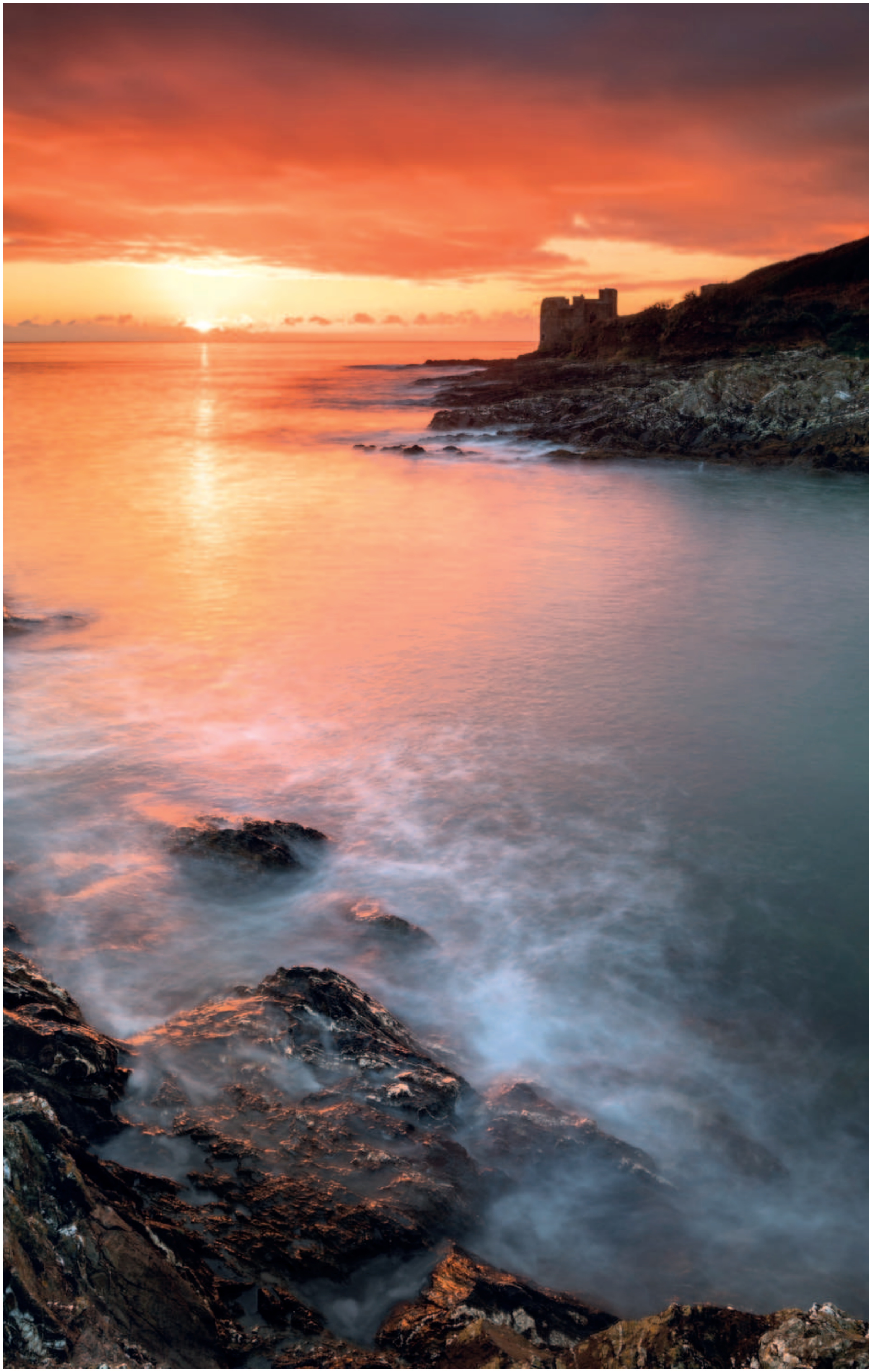
Andrew Ray
andrewrayphotography.com

Pendennis Point, Cornwall

Little Dennis Blockhouse at Pendennis Point, Falmouth, was constructed during the reign of Henry VIII to house a canon that protected the entrance to the Carrick Roads (the estuary of the river Fal) from invading foreign warships and pirates.

The blockhouse, which is built straight on to the bedrock, close to the high-water line makes a great focal point for landscape images. It is particularly well suited to compositions captured at sunrise in the weeks around the winter solstice when the sun rises at its furthest point to the south in the sky.

How to get there: From Truro, take the A39 for 12 miles to reach a mini roundabout in front of the Falmouth Hotel on the south-eastern side of Falmouth. Take the third exit, signed Scenic Route, and follow the route to the Pendennis Point parking area (1 mile). The blockhouse is on the eastern side of the car park.
What to shoot: The blockhouse at sunrise, seagoing craft sailing to and from the nearby harbour.
Other times of year: Summer mornings for sunlit images of the blockhouse.
Nearby locations:
Falmouth Harbour (1 mile);
St Anthony Head (6 miles by ferry).



Distance: 1 mile from Falmouth • 12 miles from Truro ACCESS RATING

Scott Antcliffe

Bamburgh beach, Northumberland

Northumberland boasts more castles than any other county in the UK. With over 70 castles to choose from, enthusiasts have got their work cut out. A 'must see' is the stunning Bamburgh Castle. It is more than 1,400 years old, and has spectacular views of the town of Bamburgh and the Northumberland coast. You can catch an imposing angle of the castle from the surrounding beach.

How to get there: Just 5.5 miles from the A1, Bamburgh Castle is easily accessible with ample parking nearby. If you are travelling northbound, turn off at Adderstone services and take the B1341 directly to the castle. If you are travelling southbound, take the B1342.

What to shoot: Spectacular sunrises and sunsets; seascapes; ancient architecture.

Other times of year: The castle is open all year round, the winter months reduce the crowd numbers somewhat.

Nearby locations: Farne Islands (2 miles by boat); Holy Island (16 miles).

Distance: 17 miles from Alnwick • 51 miles from Newcastle upon Tyne ACCESS RATING ●○○○○

John Rees *johnreesphoto.com*

Llynnau Mymbyr, Conwy

The Snowdon Horseshoe is the name given to the ridges and peaks on the eastern side of Snowdon, making up part of the Snowdon Massif. The peaks included in the Horseshoe are Y Lliwedd, Y Wyddfa (Snowdon) Garnedd Ugain and Crib Goch. This image shows the horseshoe from the far end of Llynnau Mymbyr near Capel Curig.

How to get there: Follow the A5 for three miles from Betws-y-Coed, then take the A4086. Follow the road for half a mile and you'll see Plas y Brenin on your left. Park on the side of the road and then go through the gate and down to the lakeside to find your perfect spot.

What to shoot: Mountain peaks, lake reflections, dramatic skies, wide open vistas.

Other times of year: This is a dramatic location in any season, but autumn and winter may offer better light.

Nearby locations: Ffos Anoddun (7 miles); Dolwyddelan Castle (11 miles).

Distance: 17 miles from Caernarfon • 48 miles from Wrexham ACCESS RATING ●○○○○

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Swansong for the summer's end

Watching a family of swans for a whole summer brought with it the potential for some proper bird photography. All that was needed were some decent conditions and the arrival of autumn, says ***Nick Smith***

There was a time when the only confirmation you needed that summer had yielded to the copper tones of autumn was that the cricket season had ended. But now the globalised franchise version of the game pays no respect to the passing of the seasons, perhaps the best way of being certain that harvest is upon us is seeing blackberries appear in the hedgerows, or when the thick morning fogs arrive. This is when the old sea bell by the lighthouse earns its keep and the world falls otherwise curiously silent, if only for a minute or two.

It would be overstating it to say that I've been waiting for the fog like a child yearns for Christmas, but I was mildly excited because I've been wanting to photograph a family of swans at the lake close to my house for some time. This anticipation started back in spring when, for the first time in five years, a pair of mute swans set up camp at the old municipal reservoir in Brynmill Park, establishing a vigil over their seven cygnets that I named after the days of the week.

I didn't expect the whole clutch to reach maturity, but as the days rolled into weeks, under their parents' watchful eye the bevy remained complete. Morning fog clinging to the lake was all I needed to get the shot that I had been constructing in my mind for the whole of summer.

'Where will they eventually go?' I asked the park keeper one morning, watching the young waterfowl, still innocuous in their buff juvenile plumage, their bills still greyish-black. 'I don't know,' came the reply, followed by a pause, followed by, 'and I don't know if they will ever come back either.'

It turns out that the cygnets weren't hatched at Brynmill but on another lake close to the main road that runs along the foreshore. As post-lockdown traffic became heavier, the parents had decided to relocate the family, and in an episode that must have resembled the migration of the rabbits in *Watership Down*, the cygnets were frog-marched inland.

'How did they cross the road?' I asked the park keeper. It seems that the good people of a local ornithological society had kept a round-the-clock watch in deckchairs with flasks of coffee, repeatedly pushing the button on the pelican crossing and holding up the traffic when the time came.

Which was when the feathers really started to fly, because upon arrival at their new home, the swans were met with a cool reception by an unimpressed quartet of feral Muscovy ducks. 'There's been a lot of fighting over territory,' I was informed by the keeper, who evidently found the saga more interesting than anything the digital world could serve up for him on Netflix.

Inclined to agree, I told him I was a photographer, and he advised me that later in the year, we'd get some good misty sunrises over the water by the reeds, and that would be the best time to shoot them. It would be my swansong for summer.

Of course, swans aren't songbirds, so quite why the collected genius of the Ancient Greeks – Aesop, Aeschylus and Aristotle among them – thought that they sang as death approached is something of a mystery to me. Leaning heavily the other way, ornithological science has named the distinctly photogenic 'mute' swan thus, not because of any lack of vocalisation but because, with its soft peeps, it simply makes less of a raucous cacophony than its cousins, and I assume considerably less than the North American trumpeter swan.

Perhaps Tchaikovsky had the best idea by making them the stars of his ballet *Swan Lake*, in which there is mercifully no singing of any sort. It was with thoughts of Princess Odette swimming in my head that I made my way to the lake in the fog.

I don't know about you, but I'm not an enthusiast for most swan photography. I know why people do it, and I've seen it done well, but if I come across another silhouette of two swans face to face, their necks describing a heart shape with a sunset glowing in the background, I'm going to call the police.

I suppose the cliché is good for Valentine's cards, and there is even a (largely dismissed) school of thought that the anatomically incorrect heart shape (or ideograph) has its origins in the side-on view of two swans meeting in what must have been seen as a romantic tryst. But my interest in swans is more rooted in objective reality.

What really fascinates me more than anything is by what magisterial physics these enormous birds – the mute swan is one of the heaviest of flying fowl – take to the air. If I were an aviation engineer, I'd study them every day of my life. My job as a photographer was to wait for that moment and see what could be done.

I didn't have to wait long. As the stumps were drawn to signify the end of the final test against India and with summer fading fast, my cygnets could be seen in a flap, running across the surface of the lake, mum and dad (more correctly 'pen and cob') supervising the ends of the runway. They practised until they were exhausted, and I wandered home wondering how long it would be until the first fog arrived. I didn't have to wait long for that either, and in one of those rare moments you sometimes get in photography, I got the exact shot I wanted.

Macro Art

Feast your eyes on these wonderful pictures from the ***Macro Art photo project****, organised by the International Garden Photographer of the Year competition*

Claire Carter – Overall Winner

Xuedong Bai

Ana Peiro

Bernadette Benz

Brian Lee

Petar Sabol

Tony North

Claire Carter

Gillian Plummer

Petar Sabol

Rachele Z Cecchini

Matthew Cremin

Brian Lee

Rachele Z Cecchini

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October 21st & November 4th

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Glencoe, Rannoch Moor & Glen Etive
November 11th - 15th 2021 & March 16th - 20th 2022

© Sarah Howard

Northumberland Castles & Coast
November 25th - 28th & March 31st - April 3rd 2022

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Romantic Venice
January 18th - 23rd 2022

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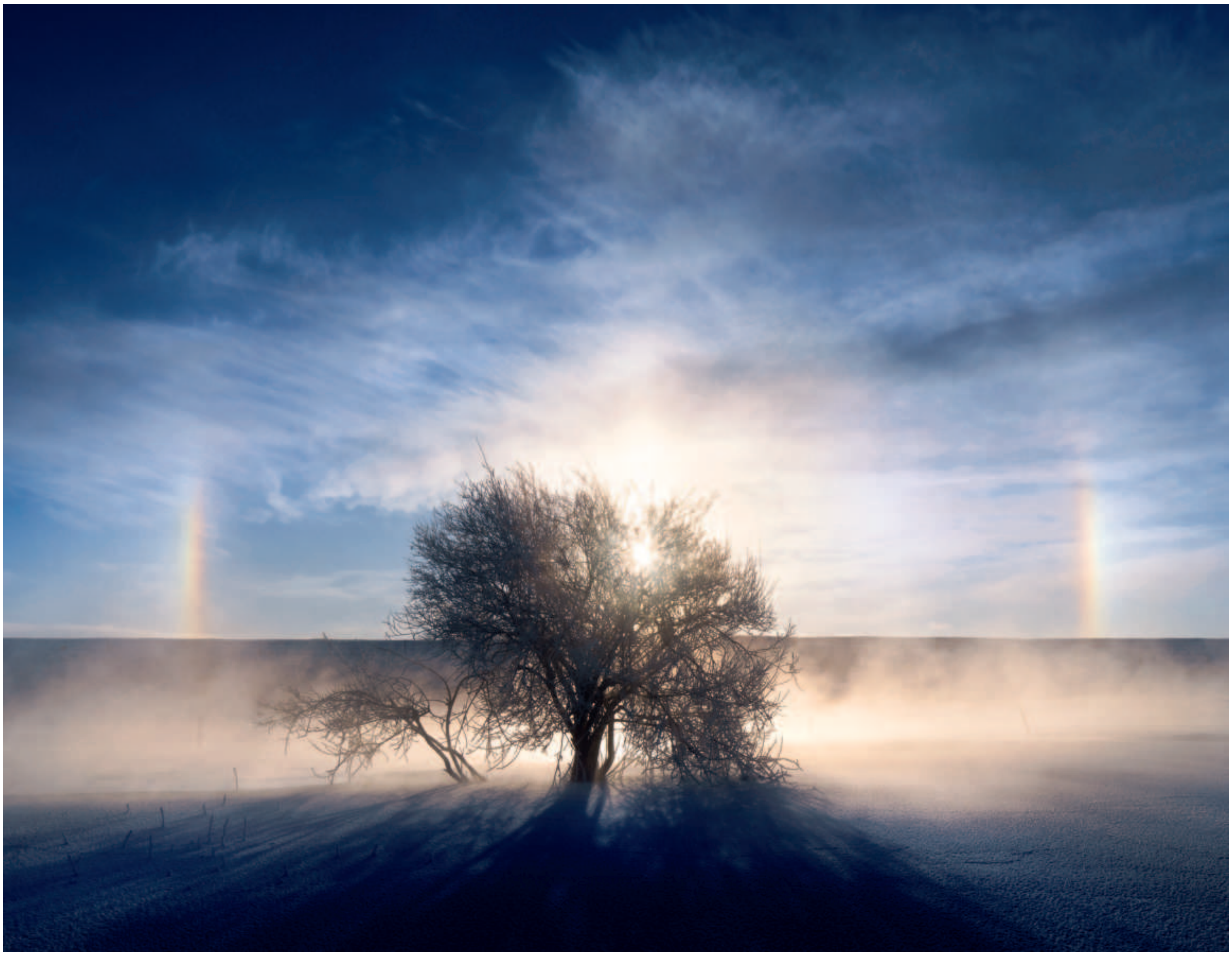
READER GALLERY

Each issue we publish the best images from those submitted to our Reader Gallery – turn to page 70 to find out how to enter your work. Here is this month's winner...



Winner **Pappu Sarkar**

I was born in West Bengal, India. A nature and travel photographer by inclination, I am currently based in Shenzhen, China. I enjoy taking long solo trips in search of unseen, majestic landscapes. Nature is still my inspiration, and my artistic soul thrives on taking the right photographs and sharing them with the world. For me, photography is bigger than just taking photos – it's an experience, and a way of truly discovering oneself.

Hometown Shenzhen
Occupation Professional in the medical device industry
Photographic experience 24 years
Website sarkarphoto.com

Above
It was extremely cold (-30°C or so) in the Inner Mongolian region in winter. I captured this moment, with the mist rising from the frozen lake below, the tree without leaves surviving the tough environment and the sun dog formed around it.

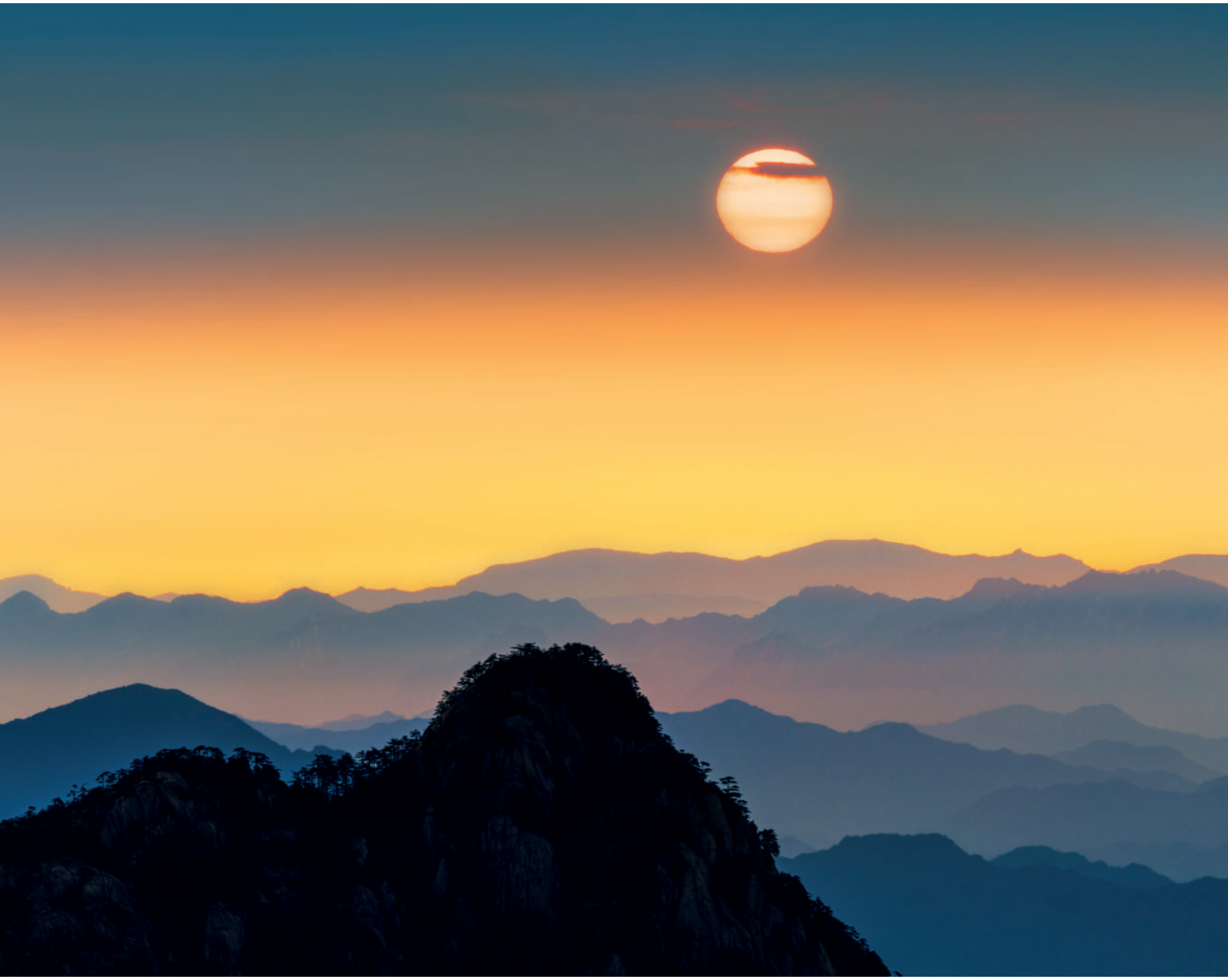
Opposite
Mongolian horses in Inner Mongolia, China. Even at a temperature below -29°C they are comfortable and do their regular activities without any hesitation.

Above These are fully grown pine trees covered with snow. This was taken in Finland on the border with Russia. This was no easy journey and the area is not accessible to regular tourists.

Below The unique landscape and raw beauty of the Highlands of Iceland is unbelievable. I took this shot while on a solo hike around the area.

Opposite (top) Kirkjufell, Iceland. Getting this perspective took me a while to figure out while walking around the area.

Opposite (below) A farmer's family in the Xingping area of Guangxi province, China.



Above This is an image from Huangshan, or Yellow mountains, in China. I managed to capture a good sunrise without much cloud cover, which gave this photograph a painterly feel.

Submit your best images and win great prizes.

This month's winner, Pappu Sarkar, receives a superb Lowepro PhotoSport BP 24L AW III backpack, worth £210.

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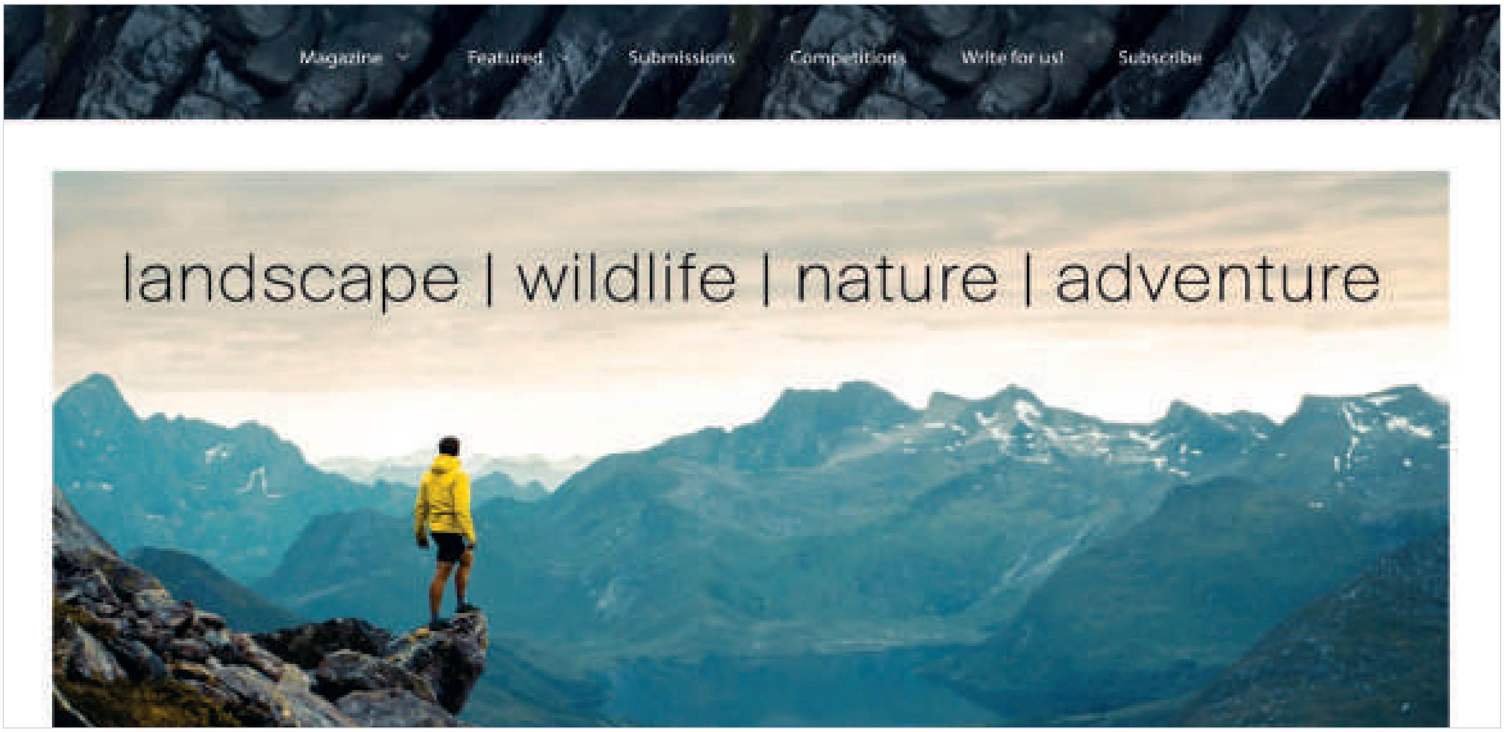

Online submissions!
Go to outdoorphotographymagazine.co.uk

If you only do one thing this month…

Sweeping Landscapes

In issue 270 we asked you to 'go big'. We invited you to send us your best images of the grandest landscapes you have shot – and your submissions were stunning. Here's our winner, ***Janet Burdon****, who receives a pair of Arc'teryx Gamma Pants, and our superb runners-up. For details of our next challenge, turn to page 95.*

WINNER
Janet Burdon
After four days cabin bound by bad weather on the Lofoten Islands, off the Arctic coast of Norway, the skies cleared, and we drove north to explore the island. Crossing the beautiful bridge at Fredvang, we arrived at Ytresand beach on a beautiful freezing cold winter's day, but with lovely, clear arctic light.
Nikon D700 with 24-120mm lens, ISO 200, 1/180sec at f/11, tripod
rjbphotographic.co.uk

86 Outdoor Photography

Outdoor Photography 87

READER GALLERY

Each issue we publish the best images from those submitted to our Reader Gallery – turn to page 70 to find out how to enter your work. Here is this month's winner…

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Opposite
Mongolian horses in Inner Mongolia, China. Even at a temperature below -29°C they are comfortable and do their regular activities without any hesitation.

64 Outdoor Photography

Outdoor Photography 65

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING THIS MONTH

Enter our Autumn Shades photo challenge and you could have your image published in issue 276 of *OP*. Plus, the winner will receive a pair of Hanwag Cliffside GTX shoes worth £160. See page 95 for details.

READER GALLERY

Send us your best outdoor images and if you're chosen as our winner your work will take pride of place in *OP*, plus you'll receive a brilliant prize. This month's Reader Gallery winner receives a superb Lowepro PhotoSport BP 24L AW III backpack, worth £210

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COMPETITION

Where in the world?

If you can tell us the name of this incredible lakeside scene you could win a pair of Komperdell Trekmaster Powerlock walking poles, worth £70

ENTER ONLINE NOW!

Surrounded by mountains rising to over 2,000m, this picturesque lake sits in a glacier-worn valley; it is a dramatic viewpoint that has always been popular with photographers.

But is it:

a: Llyn Padarn, Wales
b: Lake Wānaka, New Zealand
c: Queens Lake, Australia

The answer and the winner's name will be revealed in OP 276.

You can enter the competition online at outdoorphotographymagazine.co.uk, using Laketree273 as the competition code. Deadline for entry is 19 November 2021.

THIS MONTH'S GREAT PRIZE

Worth £70

Komperdell Trekmaster Powerlock trekking poles

The winner of this month's competition will receive a pair of Komperdell's excellent new Trekmaster Powerlock trekking poles (featured on page 83). These robust poles are made from strong but lightweight aluminium, weighing just 271g each. Comprising three sections, they are adjustable in height from 105-140cm, and closing to 64cm. A Tour 170 rubber grip ensures comfort on the move, while a tungsten-carbide flexible tip provides increased durability when hiking across uneven ground. Made in Austria, they include a three-year warranty.

For more details, visit komperdell.com

OP 270 WINNER

In issue 270 we asked you to identify the iconic bridge in the image below.

The correct answer is:

c) Bixby Creek Bridge, California

Shutterstock.com

Congratulations to our winner!
Peter Hyde from East Morecambe

96 Outdoor Photography

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Name the location on page 96 and this month you could win a pair of Komperdell's excellent new Trekmaster Powerlock trekking poles, featured on page 83. These robust poles are made from strong but lightweight aluminium, weighing just 271g each. Made in Austria, they include a three-year warranty. For more details, visit komperdell.com

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LETTER OF THE MONTH

Hooray for herring gulls

How refreshing to read about someone standing up for herring gulls (*OP* 271). Like Nick Smith I am amazed at the intelligence and beauty of these birds.

I live near the coast and I'm happy to see them every day. One gull in particular worked out that if my back door was open he could wander in through to the kitchen and help himself to my cat's food. If the door was closed, he'd politely knock with his beak. Eventually he took to queueing up with my cat for treats!

Linda Kennedy

Uninvited opinions

I have been an amateur wildlife photographer for the last seven years and have recently taken early retirement, enabling me to spend more time pursuing my photographic interests. So, I recently invested in a full-frame DSLR and 150-600mm zoom.

Previously, I was able to pursue my hobby, using a bridge camera, in relative peace, receiving the odd comment from passers-by such as, 'Have you seen anything interesting?' or, 'A kingfisher has just been spotted on the river'. However, I now feel anxious using my kit in public, due to some people who seem to take pleasure in poking fun at women with long lenses. This not only happens when I'm alone, but also when I'm with my female friend who has the same lens. From, 'Oh look, girlies with long lenses'; 'That's huge'; 'That looks heavy'; and 'You must get camera shake with that'; to giggles and whispers. Such comments border on harassment, particularly as I have never heard such comments directed at male photographers.

I was wondering just how common this is, and whether any of your other female readers have experienced the same?

Sharon Painter

***OP* says:** *We are sorry to hear of your experience, Sharon. Nobody should have to put up with this in 2021. Like you, we would be interested to hear from anyone else who has been subjected to similar comments that inhibit their photographic enjoyment.*

© Keith Sanders

Location, location, location

As a resident of Longniddry, East Lothian, for 35 years, I was excited to see Longniddry Bents featured on page 52 of issue 271, in the Locations Guide. Unfortunately, the image is definitely not Longniddry Bents.

'The Bents', as they are referred to locally, are the bent timbers which form the ribs of a long-abandoned boat which can be seen in my attached image. They are closest to the westernmost beach car park at Longniddry and are fully visible at low tide.

I suspect that the image you used is the bridge to Aberlady Bay Local Nature Reserve east of Aberlady village, some five miles from Longniddry – an area worthy of a viewpoint of its own.

Keith Sanders

***OP* says:** *Thank you for highlighting this, Keith, and apologies to Brian Nicholson who submitted the viewpoint. While the text describes Longniddry Bents, the picture shows the bridge to nearby Aberlady Bay Local Nature Reserve. We are sorry for any confusion caused by our mistake.*

Roadside photography

How often do you see images from a disabled photographer published in *OP*? I'm a landscape photographer but can only walk a few metres with sticks and then need to be in a wheelchair. Being over 70 and disabled meant a large part of 2020 was spent shielding, and then having to be very careful over social distancing. Consequently, I now spend most of my photography time visiting locations where I can take images from the car or standing a few steps away from it. This is a challenge!

Susan Rowe

Derwent Reservoir. © Susan Rowe

***OP* says:** *Luckily there are some amazing views to be enjoyed from the roadside in the UK and beyond, as your images prove, Susan. Sometimes, being constrained in some way can encourage us to think more creatively, and we hope you enjoy the challenges this brings. We're sure there are other readers who can relate to your experience, or who are restricted in terms of being able to access locations – we'd love to hear from you…*

LETTER OF THE MONTH

This month's letter of the month winner, Linda Kennedy, receives a pair of Keela Extreme Gloves worth £49.95.

Featuring Primaloft insulation, Keela's Extreme Gloves are close-fitting, flexible and well insulated to keep you warm and dry during any activity. They feature an elasticated wrist, Grip Palm, touchscreen fingers and soft nose wipe – perfect for cold days in the mountains.

Find out more at keelaoutdoors.com

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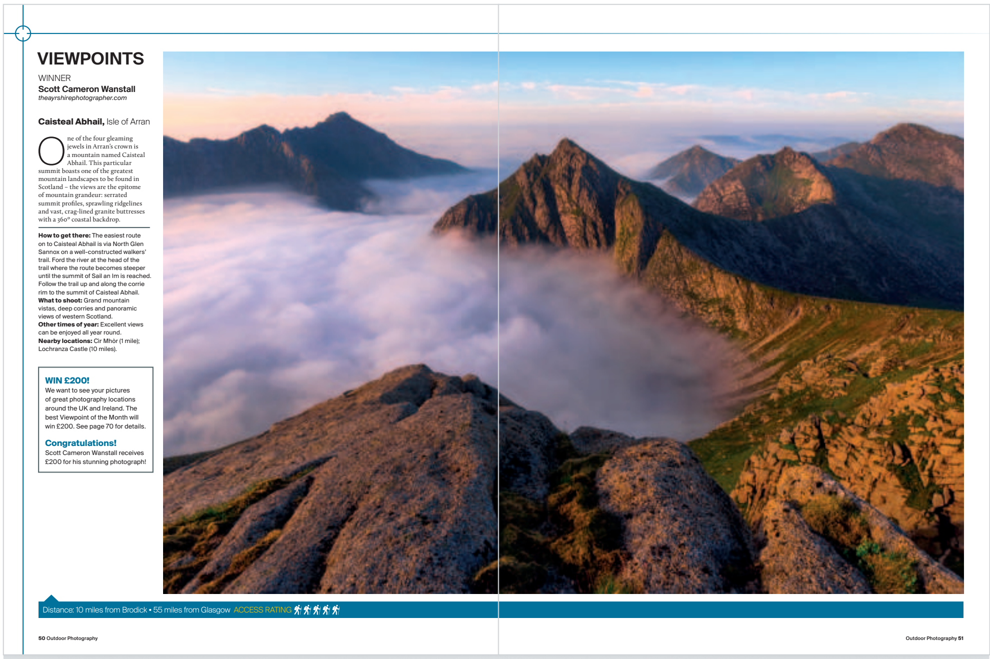
SOCIAL HUB

Social Hub, our letters page, is back! Please send your views, opinions and musings to claire.blow@thegmcgroup.com, or submit them via our website or by post (accompanying images are welcome). Our next Letter of the Month winner will receive a pair of Keela Extreme Gloves, worth £50! **Please limit your letters to about 200 words or under and be aware that your words may be edited before they are used in the magazine.**



VIEWPOINTS

WINNER
Scott Cameron Wanstall
theayrshirephotographer.com

Caisteal Abhail, Isle of Arran

One of the four gleaming jewels in Arran's crown is a mountain named Caisteal Abhail. This particular summit boasts one of the greatest mountain landscapes to be found in Scotland – the views are the epitome of mountain grandeur: serrated summit profiles, sprawling ridgelines and vast, crag-lined granite buttresses with a 360° coastal backdrop.

How to get there: The easiest route on to Caisteal Abhail is via North Glen Sannox on a well-constructed walkers' trail. Ford the river at the head of the trail where the route becomes steeper until the summit of Sail an Im is reached. Follow the trail up and along the corrie rim to the summit of Caisteal Abhail.
What to shoot: Grand mountain vistas, deep corries and panoramic views of western Scotland.
Other times of year: Excellent views can be enjoyed all year round.
Nearby locations: Cìr Mhòr (1 mile); Lochranza Castle (10 miles).

WIN £200!
We want to see your pictures of great photography locations around the UK and Ireland. The best Viewpoint of the Month will win £200. See page 70 for details.

Congratulations!
Scott Cameron Wanstall receives £200 for his stunning photograph!

Distance: 10 miles from Brodick • 55 miles from Glasgow ACCESS RATING

50 Outdoor Photography

Outdoor Photography 51

VIEWPOINTS

We want to see your favourite UK and Irish viewpoints! Send us up to 10 of your best digital images and if one of them is selected it will be published in the magazine. Plus, there's £200 up for grabs each month for the winning image. You can submit online at: outdoorphotographymagazine.co.uk **Don't forget to include your name, daytime contact number and email address. And please include camera data for each image submitted.**

EMAIL ENTRIES

We are unable to accept speculative submissions via email, so please do not send work in this way, unless requested to do so by a member of the *OP* editorial team. Send via post or online instead.

WEBSITE SUBMISSIONS

You can send us links to your website, for us to view your general work only. Please note that strictly no correspondence will be entered into regarding website submissions. Send the link to opweb@thegmcgroup.com.

PLEASE NOTE

Due to the many submissions we receive from our readers each month, if you have not heard from us within eight weeks (except for Viewpoints) then it is unlikely we will be using your work in the magazine on this occasion.

GMC Publications cannot accept liability for the loss or damage of any unsolicited material, including slides.

EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

If you would like an exhibition or event included in *Outdoor Photography*, please email markbe@thegmcgroup.com **at least 10 weeks in advance.** You can also submit it online through our website.

NEWS STORIES

Is there a current and time sensitive story you'd like us to cover in our news pages? Please email details to markbe@thegmcgroup.com or submit it online at: outdoorphotographymagazine.co.uk/contact-us

WRITE FOR US!

We are always on the lookout for inspiring new features. If you have a great idea for an article then please send a short outline (no more than 60 words), plus five high-res JPEG images for our consideration.

Exploring new locations

*After 40 years of near misses, **Laurie Campbell** finally visited the Shetland Isles, returning with hundreds of Raw files and a promise to return and further explore these remote islands*

Almost every birder I've ever spoken to has one or two 'bogey birds' – species they long to see, but never quite manage to. Arguably, the problem is more acute for nature photographers because not only do we have to find our subjects, we then have to get close enough to photograph them.

My own bogey bird has been, and still is, the Scottish crossbill. Frustratingly, whenever I find them, they are always out of range, feeding on cones at the tops of conifers – never have I been fortunate enough to find them on the ground drinking. To add insult to injury, after a long, hot summer's day spent trying to locate them in a forest on Speyside, I returned to my camper and was sitting on the back step when the twisted remains of a pine cone, seeds extracted by a crossbill, fell from above, landing directly in my mug of tea. As usual, they were too high up to photograph.

Locations can be a bit like that too. We see great images and read accounts of places but never seem to get around to paying them a visit. I have lots on my wish list, right down to grid references for veteran trees around Scotland that I would love to meet and photograph. On a grander scale, and as a professional nature photographer specialising in Scottish subjects for almost 40 years, I've always been embarrassed by the fact that I'd never visited the Shetland Isles.

My best excuse is that for much of my career, and especially during the peak months of May and June when there is so much happening in nature, I always seem to have been so deeply involved with other projects that it was impossible to break away to explore these beautiful Northern Isles.

Then, in late 2019, I received the offer of a photography commission to visit Shetland to shoot landscapes from a publishing client whose core business is in producing calendars and greetings cards for the Scottish gift trade. Sadly, I reserved space in my diary for 2020, but because of travel restrictions due to Covid-19, the opportunity slipped away.

At the time of writing in mid-July, I'm in the middle of editing and processing several hundred Raw image files that I shot last month on my first ever visit to Shetland. I took many more, but after backing them up and reviewing the results on a laptop each day, I culled as many as I could. I always try to return home from any field trip with as few images as possible to avoid adding to the mountain of unedited files languishing on hard drives back in the office.

To make the venture more affordable for my client, and in exchange for a lower fee, we agreed that I could also shoot wildlife

Above The long, shaggy manes of these Shetland ponies suggest that they are probably living wild. *Nikon D5 with 500mm f/4E FL ED VR lens, ISO 800, 1/500sec at f/5, beanbag*
Opposite Known locally as the Knab, this promontory is probably one of the lesser-known viewpoints from which to photograph Lerwick, the capital of Shetland. *Nikon D5 with 17-35mm f/2.8 AF-S lens at 17mm, ISO 1000, 1/60sec at f/18, polarising filter, handheld*

for my own stock library in situations where it was relatively quick and easy to achieve worthwhile results. My wife also accompanied me on the trip and we even managed to take time off. In fact, if there hadn't been the opportunity to share these experiences with her, then I simply wouldn't have accepted the commission.

I count the trip as a success and my client is happy, but feel that this was only the first of many more that I'll need to make to start getting to know this remote group of islands better.

Looking for new angles

Although it's essential to do some research when planning any photo trip to a new destination, it's all too easy to be influenced by images of well-photographed locations. In the case of the Isle of Skye, almost any newsagent and gift shop on the island will stock products featuring images of Elgol, Neist Point, the Quiraing and the Old Man of Storr. Indeed, some photographers commonly use these as a guide on where to go once they arrive on the island.

On my trip to Shetland, I don't mind admitting that I did likewise, partly because it seemed natural to want to remind myself of all the key sites through the eyes of a tourist, but also because my client would expect me to cover them. When it came to photographing them, I tried not to emulate the images I'd seen, but rather to look for ways of photographing them differently, if not better.

It's much the same when photographing wildlife. The most likely species that any wildlife photographer visiting Shetland might like to cover would be orca, great skua, red-throated diver, red-necked phalarope and storm petrel. Although the latter three are protected by law from disturbance in the breeding season because of their scarcity, they are all quintessentially Shetland species. I omitted others, such as otter, puffin and northern gannet, because they are all species that may be photographed relatively easily elsewhere in the UK.

It's the same the world over. Who would go to Svalbard without expecting to return with photographs of a polar bear, for example? Then again, I own a copy of the book *Svalbard* by the brilliant Swedish nature photographer Pål Hermansen and one of the pages I keep returning to shows a beautiful wideangle image of a patch of purple moss campion in an otherwise barren landscape. It's a simple yet effective image because it shows a whole new side to the place.

Whether it be landscapes or wildlife, there are always going to be opportunities to photograph them a little differently when travelling to unfamiliar locations. The key is to use your knowledge of what images already exist to help identify those that don't.

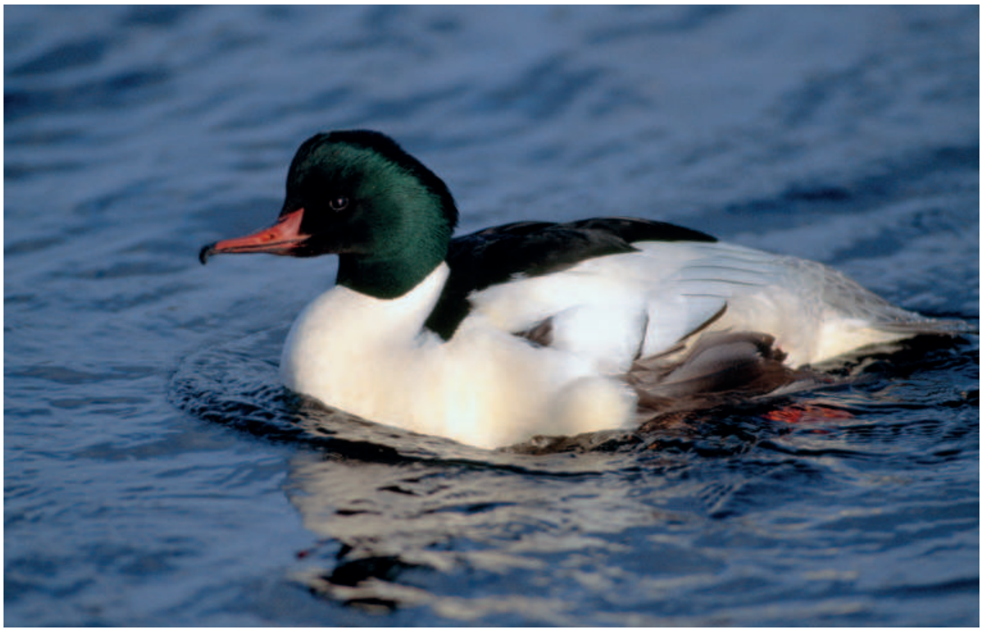
Laurie's seasonal highlights

Left (top)
Changing weather patterns and less predictable winters are starting to have an effect on the hibernation times of mammals such as dormice and **hedgehogs** (*Erinaceus europaeus*). To survive hibernation, hedgehogs born this year will need to have achieved a body weight of at least 600g. So, if you find one that seems underweight, contact one of the many animal rescue charities that overwinter them by keeping them warm and providing food until next spring. Autumn is usually the last opportunity to photograph healthy adults for the year.
Nikon D3 with 200-400mm f/4G ED VR lens at 400mm, ISO 500, 1/200sec at f/5.6, beanbag

Left (below)
Whatever the time of year, **herring gulls** (*Larus argentatus*) living in urban areas seem to be maligned for the nuisance they cause through their loud calls and the mess (droppings) they leave behind. Urban living suits them perfectly, with safe nesting sites on our buildings and a ready supply of food. They are opportunists and will exploit any food source they can, from the remains of takeaways littering our streets, to raiding bins. Humans make it too easy for them, but then they do provide some interesting opportunities for photographing bird behaviour.
Nikon D4 with 14-24mm f/2.8G AF-S lens at 14mm, ISO 1000, 1/500sec at f/5.6, beanbag, CamRanger remote, iPad

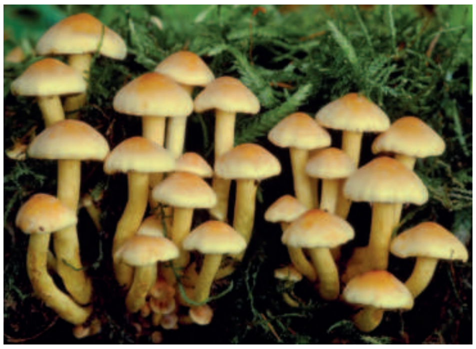
Opposite (top) **Aspen trees** (*Populus tremula*) have a wide geographical range, and some of the nicest photographs we see of them are taken in North America, where landscape photographers have long exploited their potential. Whether it be monochrome images of their densely packed pale trunks photographed with a telephoto lens to compress the perspective, or groves of trees in full autumn colour, it's difficult to match such scenes here in the UK. We may not have great expanses of them, but there are still good images to be taken of their foliage.
Nikon D5 with 500mm f/4E FL ED VR lens, ISO 1000, 1/160sec at f/5.6, handheld

Opposite (below)
Goosanders (*Mergus merganser*) are one of the three UK species of the 'sawbill' family of ducks, so-called because of the serrated edges on their bills for grasping slippery fishy prey. The other two – **smew** (*Mergellus albellus*) and **red-breasted merganser** (*Mergus serrator*) – are less common. In some river systems, goosanders are culled under licence in the name of preserving fish stocks for angling, so they become exceptionally wary and difficult to approach. Those on waterways near to towns and cities are tolerated more and are much easier to photograph.
Nikon F5 with 500mm f/4 AF-S lens, Fujichrome Provia 100, 1/320sec at f/7.1, beanbag



More seasonal subjects

Flora



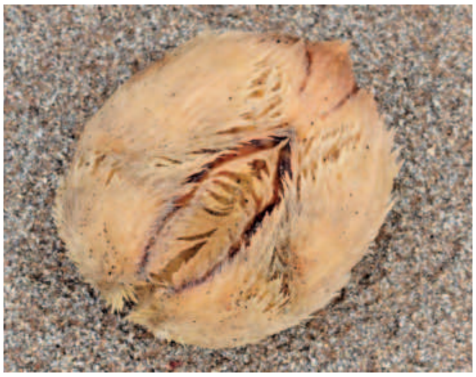
Sulphur tuft fungi
Nikon F4S with 200mm f/4 IF-ED Micro lens, Fujichrome Velvia 50, 1/4sec at f/22, tripod, cable release, mirror lockup

Sulphur tuft fungi (*Hypholoma fasciculare*) – a common and prolific species that grows in dense clusters on dead timber.

Guelder rose berries (*Viburnum opulus*) – the red berries of this shrub are eaten by thrushes and bullfinches.

Whitebeam (*Sorbus aria agg*) – another tree with red berries, but to identify it, the underside of its leaves are silvery green.

Fauna



Heart urchin
Nikon D3X with 200mm f/4 IF-ED micro lens, ISO 100, 1/3sec at f/29, tripod, cable release, mirror lockup

Heart urchin (*Echinocardium cordatum*) – the fragile shell-like remains are often washed ashore, but the live animals live below the surface of the sand.

Greenland white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*) – the entire world population of below 25,000 winters exclusively in Scotland and Ireland.

Herald moth (*Scoliopteryx libatrix*) – a species commonly seen in autumn, with distinctive orange-brown wings that blend well with fallen leaves.

This once-mighty apex predator is thought to have died as a result of rising temperatures and vanishing sea ice. **Ashley Cooper** *highlights the polar bear's desperate plight*

In July 2013, I was aboard the *Akademik Sergey Vavilov*, a Russian ice-strengthened expedition ship off the coast of Svalbard, Norway. The photo shoot was part of my project to document the causes and impacts of climate change on all seven continents, an epic journey that took 14 years to complete.

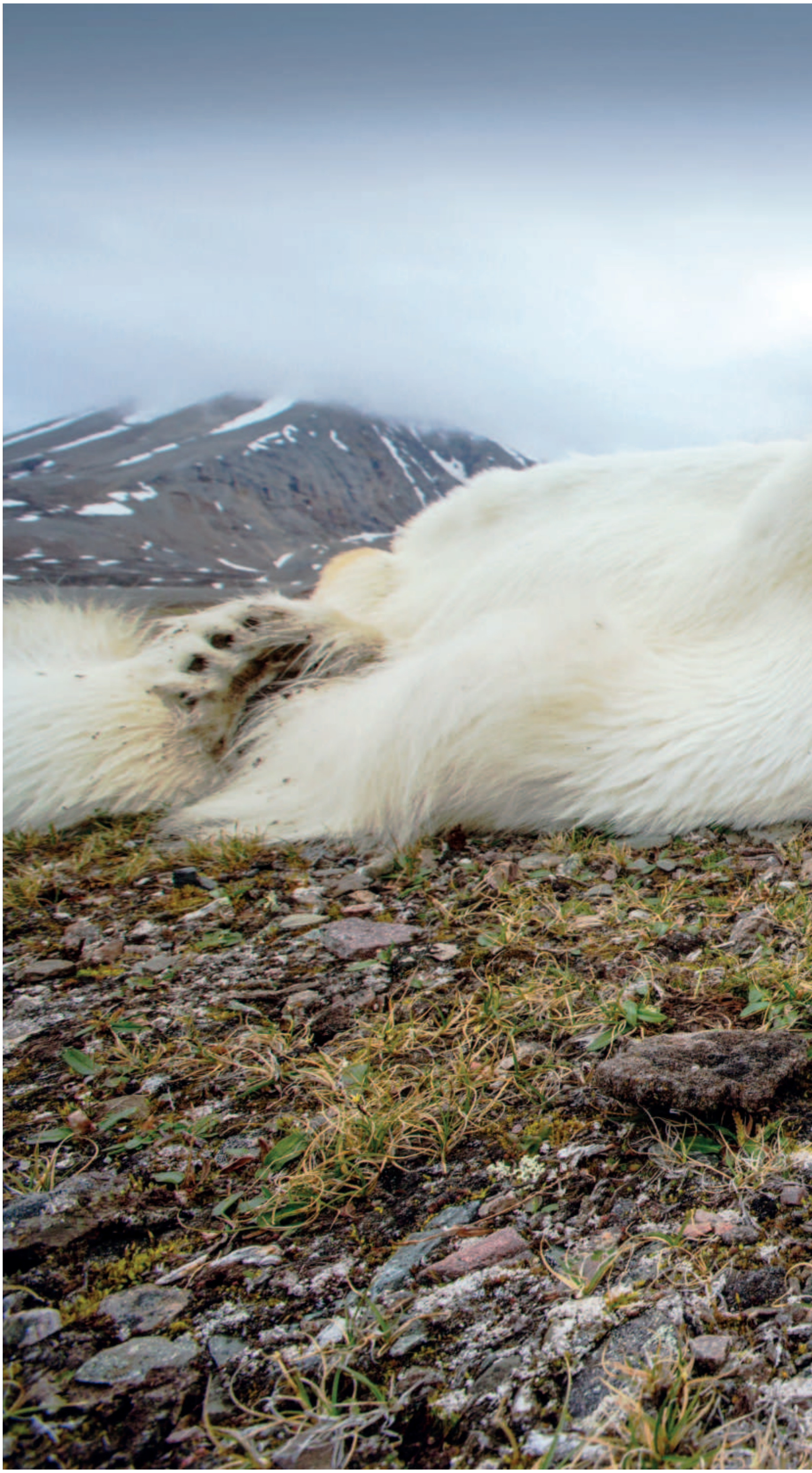
On the morning of 7 July, we were stationed off Texas Bar – 79º, 37 minutes north; 12º, 43 minutes east – in north-west Svalbard. A pale patch on the land was spotted and a Zodiac was sent out to investigate. On return to the vessel, the staff member reported that it was a dead polar bear. The decision was made to go and take a look at it. What greeted us was the tragic sight of a once-mighty predator reduced to a bag of skin and bones, making starvation the most likely cause of death.

Polar bears spend most of the summer on land, fasting and waiting for the sea ice to form in the winter so they can go out and hunt their main prey, which is seals. In a good winter, they consume a sufficient number of these fat-rich pinnipeds to lay down enough fat to see them through the lean summer months. The bear in question had been collared so it could be radio tracked by the Norwegian Polar Institute (NPI). It turned out that this bear had spent most of its life in southern Svalbard, happily sitting out the summers on land and hunting seals on the sea ice in winter.

Climate change is rapidly altering the Arctic, with sea ice vanishing at an alarming rate. While the average temperature rise of the planet so far is around 1.2°C, some areas of the Arctic have risen by 9°C in the last 100 years. This unprecedented rate of temperature rise is what is driving sea-ice melt and retreat. In the winter of 2012/13, the western fjords of Svalbard remained ice-free all winter. The season was one of the worst on record for sea ice around the island.

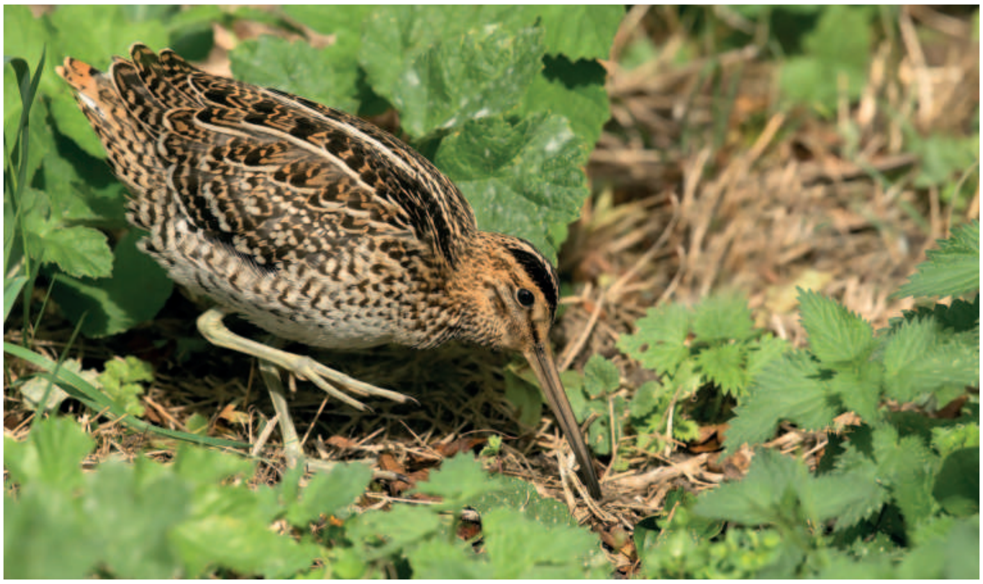
The NPI tracked the bear walking around 500 miles further north, presumably in an attempt to find some sea ice to hunt on. Even in northern Svalbard, the area remained ice-free, trapping the bear with no access to its prey. While you can't say with 100% certainty, the most likely scenario for this bear's tragic death was starvation due to lack of sea ice, driven by climate change.

Scientific studies had already revealed that polar bears are getting thinner and weighing less, due to a lack of available sea ice to enable them to hunt. Scientists predict that this awesome apex predator will soon become extinct in a rapidly warming world.



On the wing

An obsession with rare birds leaves **Steve Young** *yearning for a trip to the east coast, where even the briefest glimpse of something unusual among the common is enough to set his pulse racing*



You can't beat an autumn day out on the east coast, especially if a mega-rare is around, and they don't come much rarer than this great snipe, photographed at Spurn, Yorkshire, a few years ago. It was actually too close at times for my 500mm lens and that doesn't happen very often with rarities.

As someone who has always been interested in rare birds, autumn has always been my favourite time of the birding year. Rarities from virtually anywhere can be seen in the UK, depending on which way the wind blows, how strong the storms are and how good my fellow birders are at finding them.

But after 20 years of spending two or three weeks on the Isles of Scilly photographing rare/scarce birds, and countless other days travelling all over the country doing the same, the passion has declined. So, while the shutter finger still itches every now and then, these days I have convinced myself I'm content to stay local and see what other photographic offerings autumn has to offer.

Taking photos of the commoner species in an authentic, natural autumn setting can be incredibly difficult. I used to do a lot of feeding station work a few years ago, and between September and November took lots of images with branches and leaves of various autumn colours arranged for an autumnal shoot. But I see so many set-up shots these days that, to my eyes at least, they look just what they are: set-ups, with perfectly placed leaves that would never happen in a natural shot, unless you were the luckiest photographer in the world.

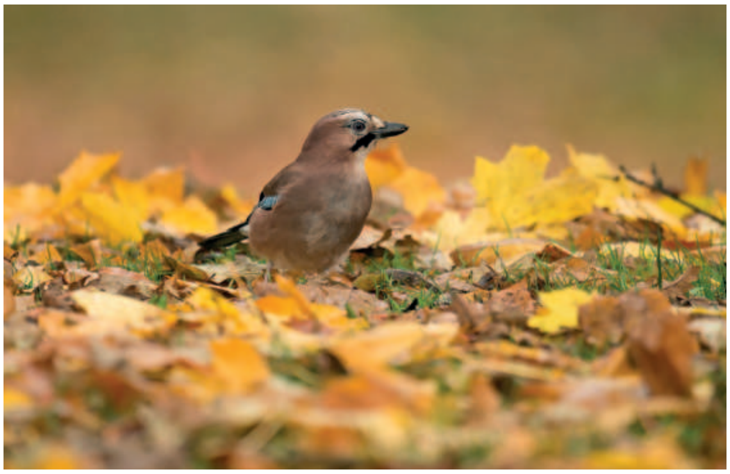
My garden is not the most exciting place during the autumn. Yes, there are lovely colours as the leaves change and berries are aplenty on the rowan tree, but bird numbers always drop at this time of year and by the time anything interesting arrives, such as the odd redwing or fieldfare, the wood pigeons have devoured all the berries.

The local park can be a good place for jay photography, with peanuts thrown among the fallen leaves being easily found, and they are much tamer here in an urbanised setting than in a wild and natural woodland, but there are only so many jay photos you can take.

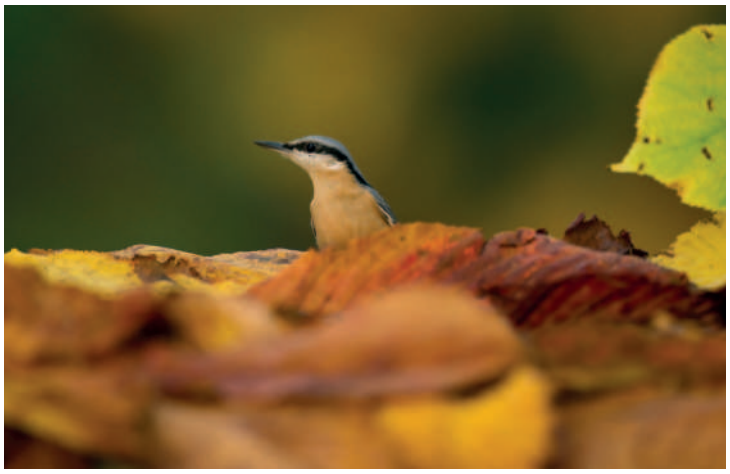
Autumn butterflies always bring that last feel of summer to my photography; capturing an image of a comma or red admiral perched on blackberry on a warm autumn day has a great atmospheric feel to it, more so for me than one taken during the summer. It's also the last-chance saloon for butterfly photography before these particular species go into hibernation.

Fungi are also at their peak during this season and there can't be anyone who hasn't paused to snap away at a fly agaric, with its red-and-white spotted colours – again, a classic autumnal image.

But I must admit, having looked at all the autumn options, I've come to the conclusion that I really do miss the excitement of a day out on the east coast when the chance of seeing something unusual, mixed in with the hundreds of commoner migrants, is just too good to miss. A rarity near home would be perfect as, although the obsession with rare birds throughout the year may have gone, when autumn comes around, I can just feel my lens being pulled in that direction.

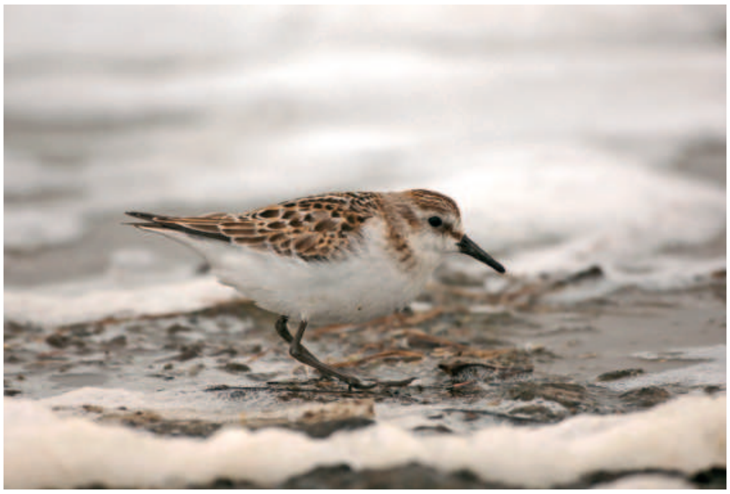


Jay
A totally natural shot taken from my car with a 500mm lens as this jay searched for acorns along the central reservation of a dual carriageway.



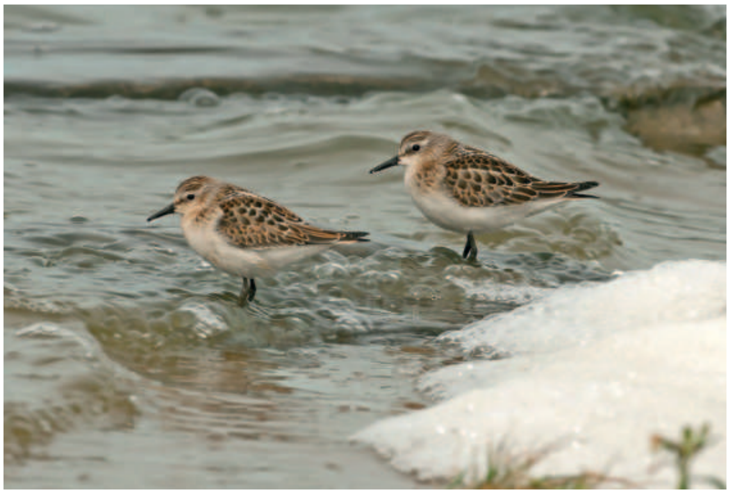
Nuthatch
A staged shot with the leaves placed on a bird table. It looks like that to me now, but at the time I thought it looked like a ground-level shot.

BIRD OF THE MONTH



Little stints

Photographed on the fringes of Crosby Marina, this lone little stint allowed a close approach as it fed unconcernedly along the shallow edges.

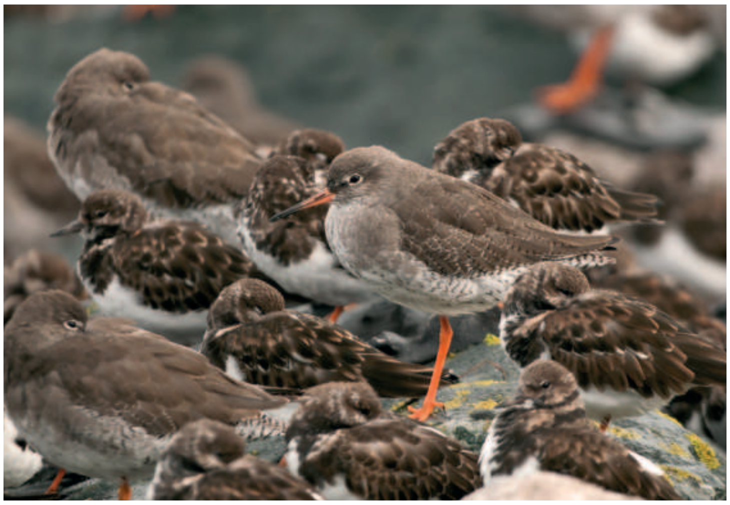


Two juvenile little stints along the shoreline – you wait for one to come along in the autumn and then two arrive together.

Among the thousands of waders migrating during the autumn months will be little stints. Most of these will be juvenile birds mixed in with the commoner dunlin, standing out because of their small size. This size gives them their name and, combined with a small black bill and two prominent white stripes along the back, should clinch the identification if you come across one.

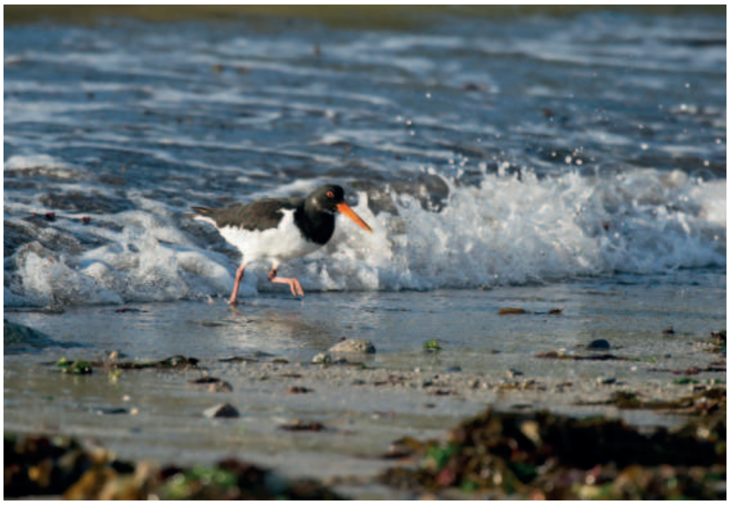
They can turn up in odd places such as small inland pools or concrete-sided reservoirs and, if on their own, can allow a close approach. This is because they breed on tundra landscapes and are unlikely to have had contact with humans.

BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY TIP



Redshank

The 'guardians' of wader flocks, redshank delight in calling a warning to other birds that photographers are nearby. Even in this roosting shot with turnstones, the redshank is awake and ready.



Oystercatcher

Sometimes, a smaller image including lots of habitat along the beach can be very effective; I could have moved closer to this oystercatcher, but chose not to.

Autumn is prime time for wader photography along our shores and estuaries, with numbers building up for the winter months ahead. But photographing waders along the shore can be a tricky business; as mentioned earlier, a lone little stint shouldn't pose much of a problem, but if it is mixed in with a larger group of birds then the situation changes.

If you are on a beach and faced with a flock of autumn waders, never walk straight at them, as they will simply fly off. A mixed flock that includes just one redshank is almost impossible to approach, as this species seems to delight in its role as guardian and alarm giver!

Sanderling flocks will walk past photographers if you stay still and wait for them; dunlin and knot can be quite tame, but only if you 'walk with them' rather than at them. Walk alongside the flock, keeping a sensible distance, kneel or sit down (waterproof trousers recommended) and wait for them to approach you.

Remember, many of these birds have travelled thousands of miles from their breeding grounds to spend autumn and winter in the UK; they need to feed but can be easily spooked by walkers, joggers and dogs. With this in mind, tread carefully and try to avoid disturbing them.

The OP guide to... **socks**

They're the Christmas gift that no-one gets excited about, but when it comes to being comfortable in the great outdoors, a good pair of socks can be one of the wisest investments you make. However, you might be surprised to learn that there's a vast array of different types of socks, all with their own benefits. ***Ben Weeks*** *picks five pairs that will keep your feet warm, dry and comfortable*

1000 Mile Fusion Double Layer Walking Sock

Best for sensitive, blister-prone feet

Even a small blister can cause misery when you're on your feet for any amount of time. There are various ways to prevent rubbing, from lacing techniques to smearing your feet with petroleum jelly, but one of the most effective ways is to wear two pairs of socks – a thin liner pair under a thicker pair. The idea is that any friction will be between the two layers, rather than against your skin. 1000 Mile has simplified the process by creating a two-in-one double-layer sock. The outer layer is made from a fusion of 40% Merino wool and manmade fibres, while the inner layer is made from Tactel, a soft, light, fast-drying fabric. As a result, not only do the Fusion socks come with padded zones on the heel, toe and Achilles tendon for comfort, they also offer 1000 Mile's blister-free guarantee.

£15.99 1000mile.co.uk

Darn Tough Sunset Ridge Micro Crew Lightweight Hiking Sock

Best for lighter or more casual footwear

In the days when walking socks were created to be paired with heavy, unforgiving leather boots and worn pulled up to your knees with your trousers tucked into them, they were primarily of the thick, woollen variety. Any cushioning was merely a by-product of the chunky knit. Walking socks have moved on a lot since then, but the importance of a fabric's ability to wick moisture is still important. For this reason, wool still gets used – like in these Darn Tough socks – but modern seamless knitting processes can add cushioning without increasing the bulk of the sock. These lighter-weight socks offer much of the comfort of their chunkier counterparts but are better suited to hotter conditions or wearing with today's vast array of lighter, more casually styled walking footwear.

£21 darntough.com

Sealskinz Waterproof All Weather Mid Length Sock

Best for keeping feet dry, however wet the weather

Waterproof membranes are regularly used in jackets, trousers, gloves and footwear to keep us dry, but they're not often found in socks. This is Sealskinz's original waterproof sock and features a 100% hydrophilic membrane sandwiched between a durable nylon-blend outer layer and a warm and wicking Merino wool interior. This membrane keeps water out of the sock, while allowing moisture from inside the sock to travel through it and evaporate away. And it really does keep the water out; you can actually stand in water in these socks and your feet will stay dry. This makes the Sealskinz perfect for tackling wet conditions without waterproof footwear, or for wading through terrain that's so wet and boggy that water could get in over the top of your membraned boots.

£35 sealskinz.com

Bridgedale Midweight Merino Comfort Boot Sock

Best for general-purpose everyday hiking

If you're looking for a general-purpose walking sock that can be worn all year round to walk the dog, trek up the Lake District fells or tackle the West Highland Way, these Bridgedale socks are the ones. Made from a mix of 27% Merino wool, 50% Coolmax polyester, 22% nylon and 1% Lycra, they offer a soft, fast-drying, durable sock with a close supportive fit around your foot. Their elasticated arch and 3D-shaped heel cup ensure the sock doesn't move around on your foot, keeping the zonal padding exactly where it's meant to be, providing extra support and comfort for long days on your feet. The Flat Toe Seam minimises bulk in the toe of the sock that could cause irritation, and the stretch-ribbed cuff provides an unrestrictive comfortable fit around your calf.

£19.50 bridgedale.com

Lorpen Trekking & Expedition Std

Best for keeping feet warm in the coldest conditions

As soon as you stop moving, you start to cool down. In icy weather, when you're hanging around waiting for the low winter sun to cast its light over the landscape, or for the fleeting wildlife to emerge from its snug den to hunt in the snow, feet that were just about comfortable on the walk-in will soon start to chill. And for those with poor circulation, the problem can be even more extreme. These socks have been designed for mountaineering and trekking in the coldest of climates, from the high altitudes of the Himalaya to the frozen wilderness of the Arctic, and their price tag reflects their technicality. But if you suffer from cold feet (and cold feet can really make you suffer) and intend to spend hours outside hunting the perfect winter photograph, they may well be worth the investment.

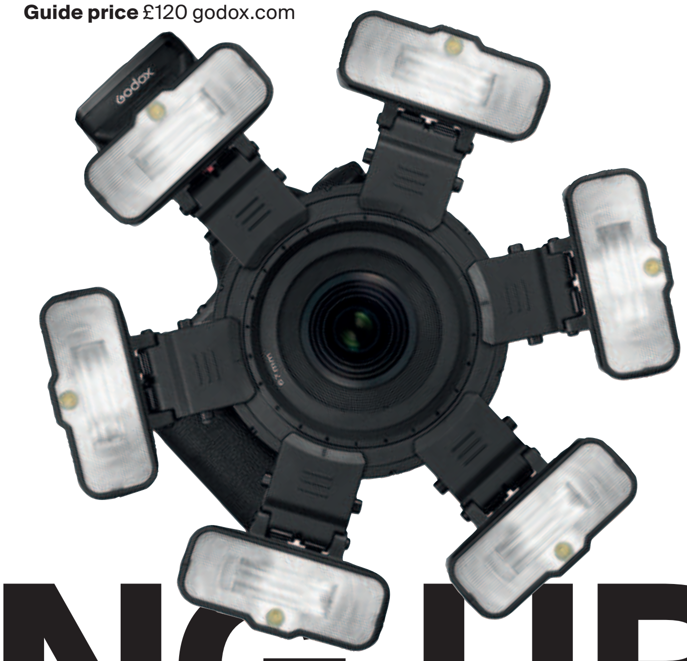
£65 lorpen.co.uk

GEARING UP

TAMRON
LOCK
18-300mm F/3.5-6.3
Di III-A VC VXD
18
35
50
70
100
200

Godox Macro Flash MF12

For close-up projects, Godox has announced a new MF12 macro flash. The flash itself is handy enough with a guide number of 12, a 1/128-1/1 power range, recycle times of 0.01-1.7 secs, full TTL compatibility and a rechargeable battery that gives up to 500 exposures at full power. But more interesting is that its design lets it be mounted onto an option ring around your lens' front element, and up to six flashes can be used. It's compatible with Canon, Fujifilm, Nikon, Olympus, Panasonic and Sony.
Guide price £120 godox.com



Tamron 18-300mm f/3.5-6.3 Di III-A VC VXD

An all-in-one 16.6x zoom, the Tamron 18-300mm f/3.5-6.3 Di III-A VC VXD should be of great interest to landscape and travel photographers looking to pack light and cover a range of subjects. Weighing 620g and measuring around 12cm long, it'll be available in Sony E and Fujifilm X mounts, giving a 27-450mm full-frame equivalent. It uses Tamron's Vibration Compensation system to fight camera shake, its VXD linear motor promises quick and quiet AF, and it has a close focusing distance of 15cm at the wide end.
Guide price £680 tamron.co.uk

LEE100 holder for Nikon Z 14-24mm

Lee Filters has expanded its LEE100 filter system to fit Nikon's Z 14-24mm f/2.8 S ultra-wide zoom. The new holder is physically larger than the standard LEE100 holder in order to prevent vignetting at the widest focal lengths. Made from aluminium, it's strong and easy to fit, using visual 'smart alignment' markings to help. It also comes with an integrated gasket and anti-reflective coating to offset light leaks, and takes the same quick-change filter frames as the regular system, fitting 100x100mm and 100x150mm filters.
Guide price £150 leefilters.com

Manfrotto
FLUID PAN

Manfrotto Element MII Fluid Monopod

Adding stability when working with telephoto lenses, Manfrotto's Element MII Fluid Monopod is an aluminium model combining a lightweight 0.67kg design, 16kg maximum payload, 128cm upper height and extra smooth Fluid Drag System base for more flexible composition, or smooth movement in video. Closing to 50.5cm, it's easy to pack or attach to your bag, and has a four-section leg with ergonomic twist locks, the first Manfrotto monopod to do so, making it both quick and comfortable to set up.
Guide price £80 manfrotto.co.uk

Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG DN OS

Promising to be a versatile option for wildlife, this 4x telezoom is the first that Sigma has designed specifically for full-frame mirrorless cameras. Launched for Sony E-mount cameras, as well as the L mount that includes Panasonic, Leica and Sigma's own bodies, its construction includes 25 elements in 15 groups, and is claimed to provide highly detailed images, retaining natural contrast even in strong backlight. Optically stabilised, it also promises fast, accurate AF, and includes a three-stage focus limiter.

Guide price £1,199 sigma-imaging-uk.com

Leofoto Poseidon LP-284C

Treated right, a tripod should last a lifetime, but that means regular servicing, especially after use at the coast. Leofoto's Poseidon tripods combine a corrosion-resistant titanium finish with newly designed twist-lock leg sections that are resistant to sand and water, so all that's required is a quick rinse. The LP-284C uses 10-layer woven carbon fibre material, supports up to 10kg, can be raised to 1.29m, and comes with an LH-30 Arca-Swiss compatible ball head. If you were in any doubt of its hard-wearing credentials, it also has a 10-year warranty.

Guide price £429 leofoto.eu

Komperdell Trekmaster Powerlock

Drawing on its experience in making technical trekking poles for mountaineering, Komperdell has released the Trekmaster Powerlock, a robust three-section walking pole made from lightweight but strong aluminium. Adjustable in height from 105-140cm, and closing to 64cm, these Austrian-made poles weigh only 271g each and also feature a comfortable Tour 170 rubber grip, while a tungsten-carbide flexible tip is used for increased durability when hiking across uneven ground. A three-year warranty is included.

Guide price £70

komperdell.com

Lowepro PhotoSport BP AW III

Lowepro's 'green line' of backpacks supports sustainability and uses 75% recycled material without compromising performance. New to the range, the PhotoSport BP AW III comes in 15L (£165) and 24L (£210) sizes, which are designed for active photographers. They use Lowepro's trusted ActivZone harness system, and split storage between a removable camera compartment and a top section for outdoor essentials. There's a decent number of accessory straps for tying on poles, tripods or camping gear, and although the outer is weather resistant, a separate rain cover is included.

lowepro.com

Scarpa Rapid

Light and agile at only 295g, the Rapid is the lightest model in Scarpa's approach shoe range, making it ideal for hiking trails and mountain terrain, and blurring the line between traditional approach and trail running shoes. It uses a heel loop design for easy attachment to a harness if you need to change into boots, and offers a precise and comfortable fit thanks to the internal Sock-Fit LW system, meaning there's less slip in the heel. They're available in 'rock orange' for men and 'violet blue' for women.

Guide price £135 scarpa.co.uk

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Outdoor
Photography

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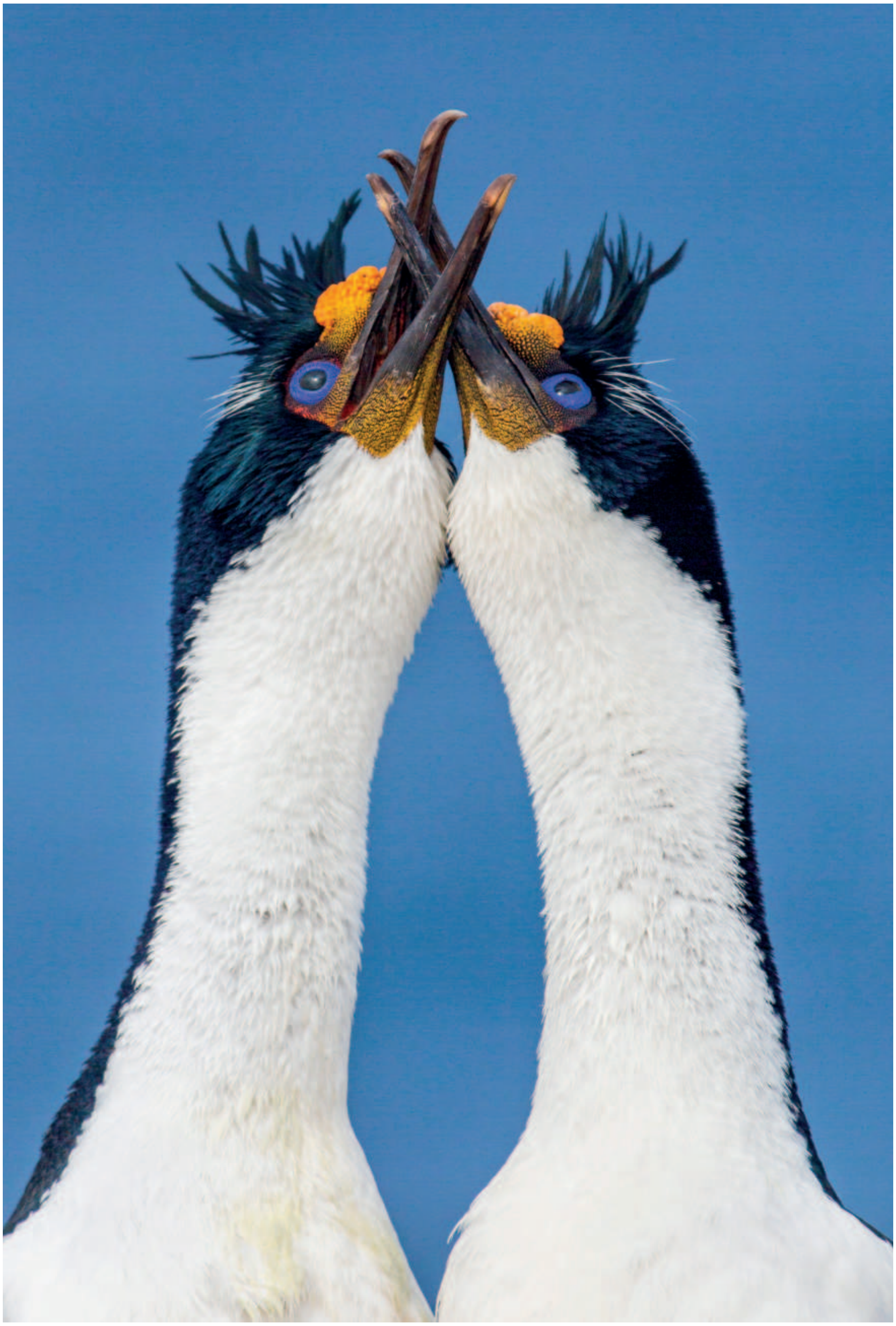
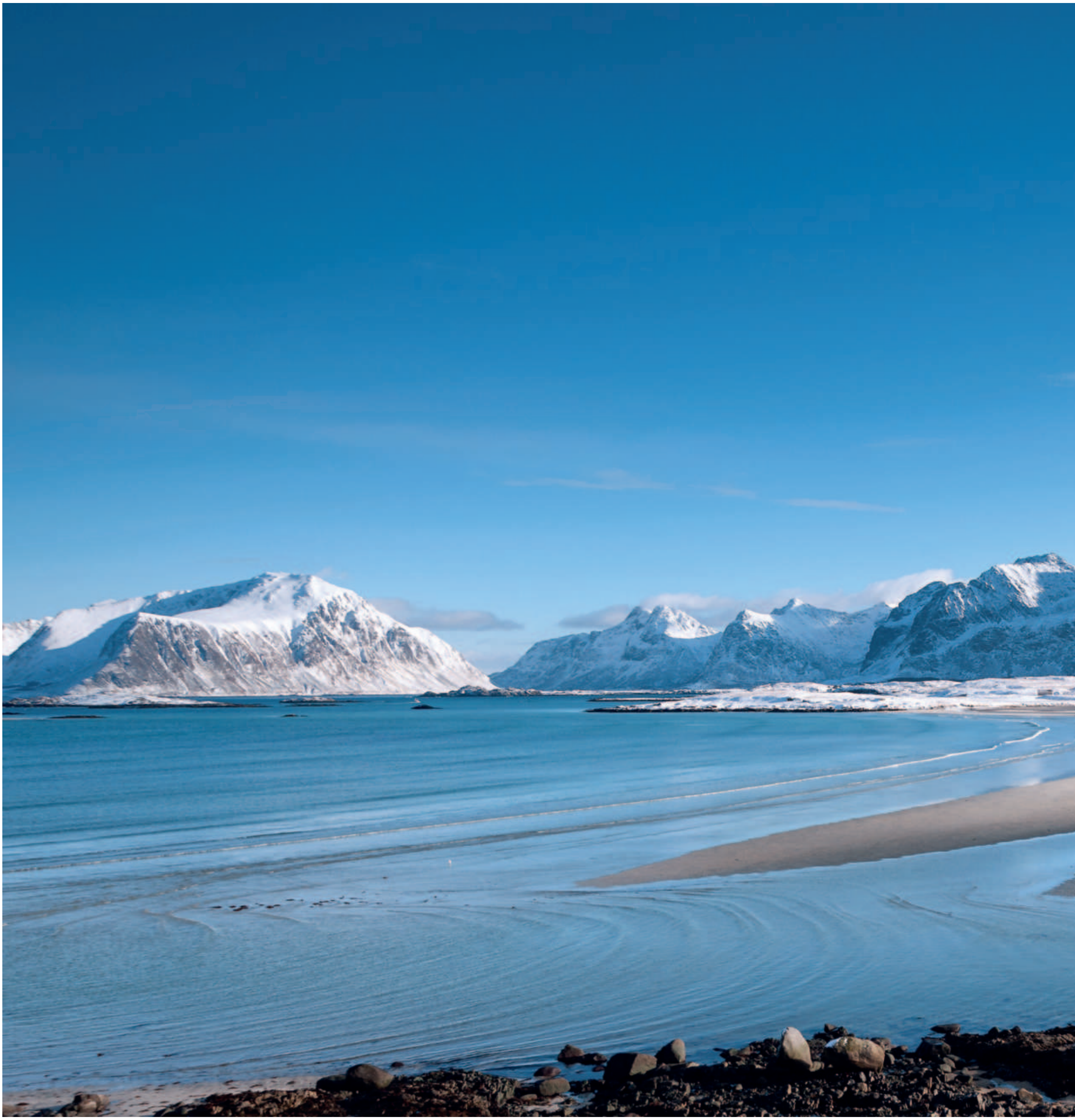
NEXT ISSUE

Outdoor Photography 274 | On sale 4 November

Shooting in adverse weather conditions
Laurie Campbell celebrates the return of the otter
Fabulous pictures from Bird Photographer of the Year



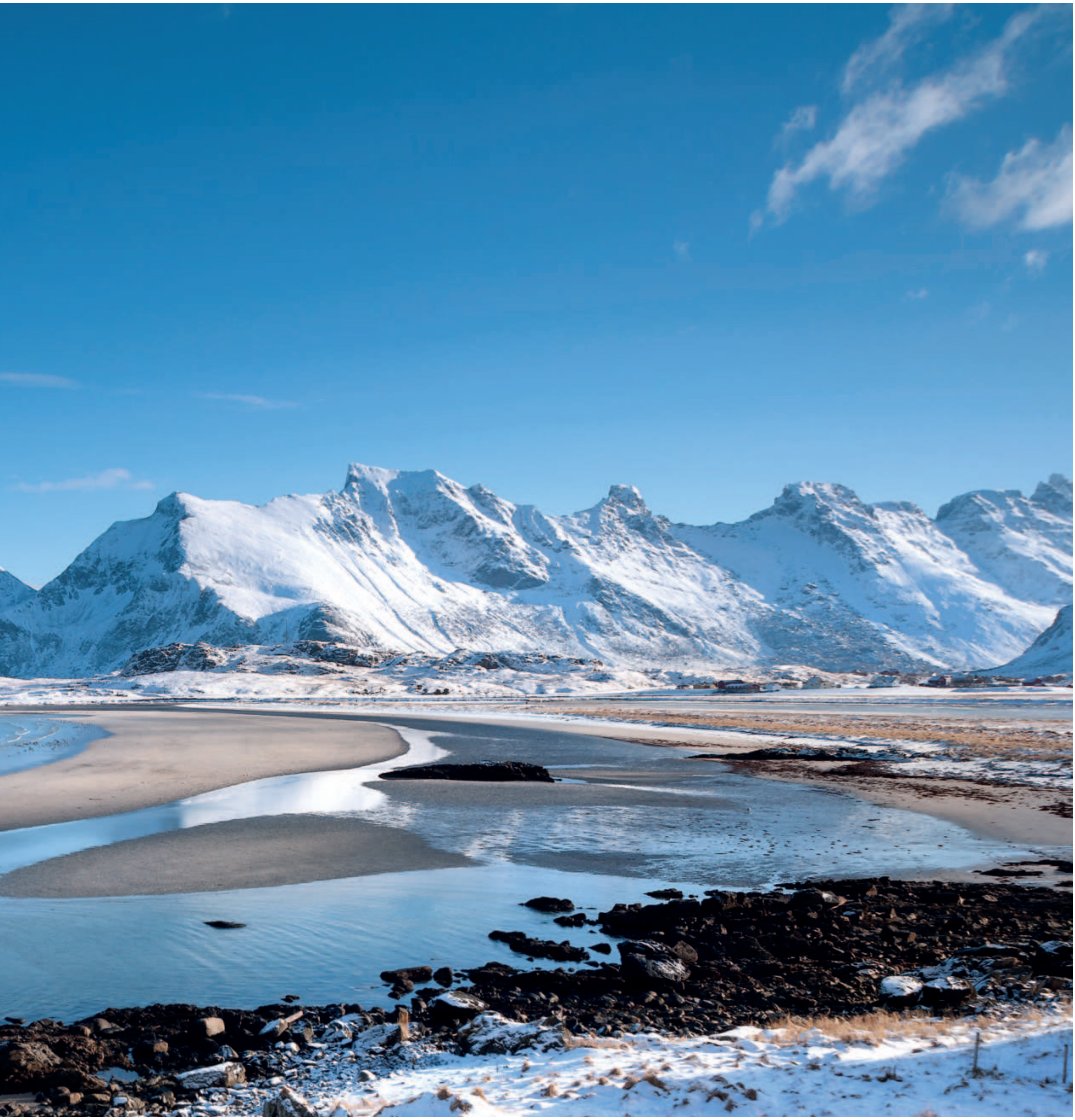
© Julie Halliday/Bird Photographer of the Year



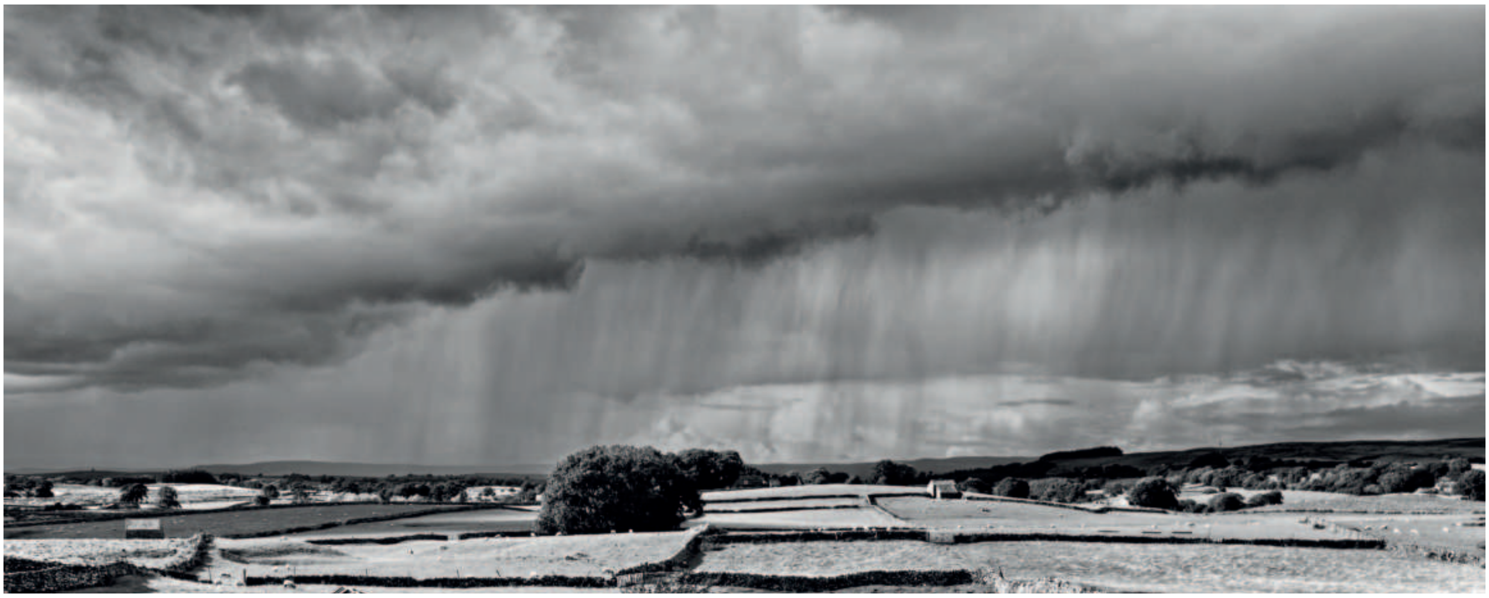
If you only do one thing this month...

Sweeping Landscapes

In issue 270 we asked you to 'go big'. We invited you to send us your best images of the grandest landscapes you have shot – and your submissions were stunning. Here's our winner, ***Janet Burdon****, who receives a pair of Arc'teryx Gamma Pants, and our superb runners-up. For details of our next challenge, turn to page 95.*



WINNER
Janet Burdon
After four days cabin-bound by bad weather on the Lofoten Islands, off the Arctic coast of Norway, the skies cleared, and we drove north to explore the island. Crossing the beautiful bridge at Fredvang, we arrived at Ytresand beach on a beautiful freezing cold winter's day, but with lovely, clear arctic light.
Nikon D700 with 24-120mm lens, ISO 200, 1/180sec at f/11, tripod
rjbphotographic.co.uk

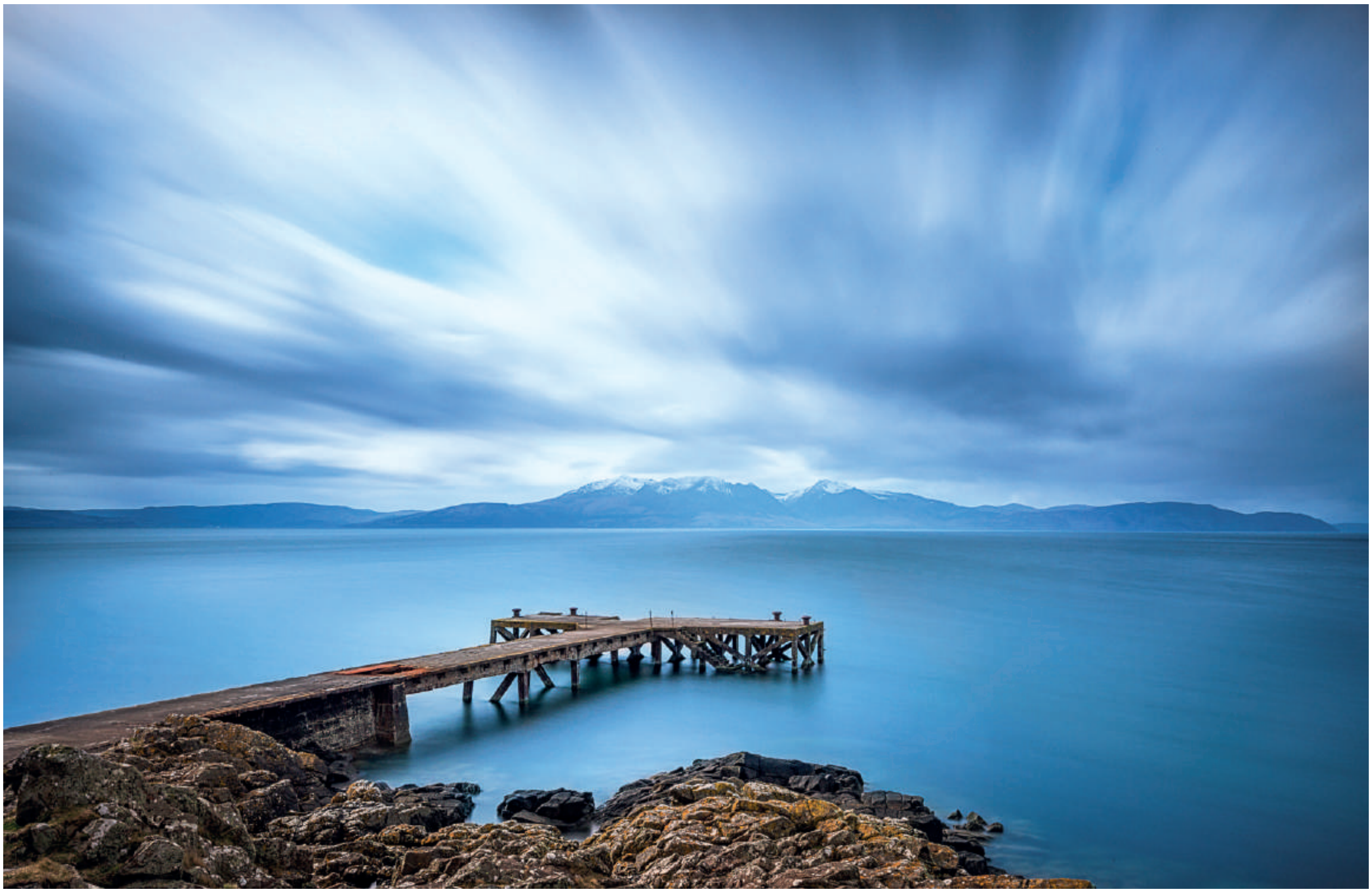


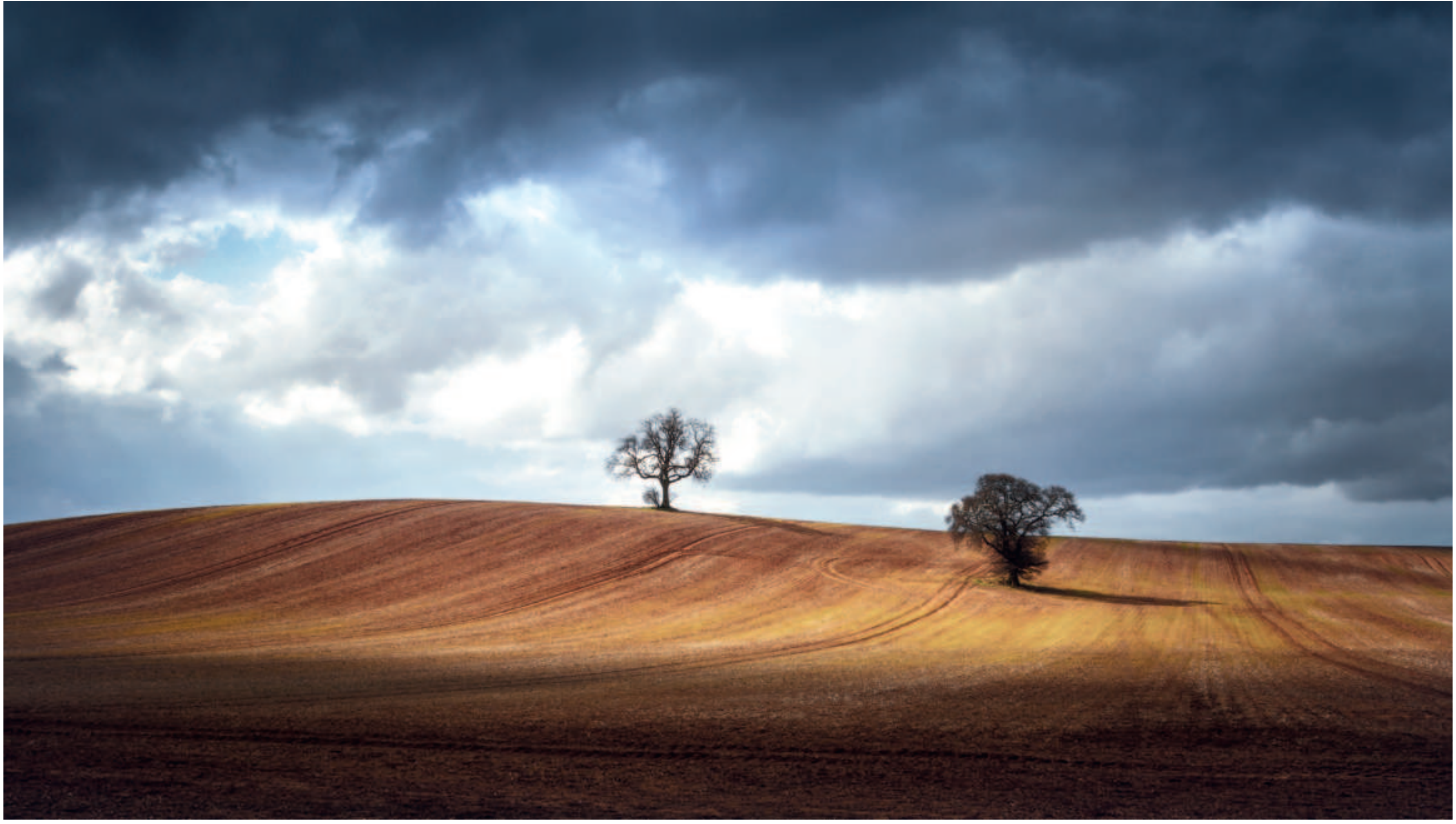
Above **Anthony Cooper**
Storm approaching across the Vale of Eden, Cumbria; this was the view from our holiday cottage as a storm approached. *Canon EOS M3 with 15-45mm lens, ISO 100, 1/200sec at f/8*

Below **Maggie Ridgewell**
My aim here was to evoke, through the use of a long exposure, the feeling of sadness that this disused and abandoned pier at Portencross conjured up in me. It is no longer used by steamers on the Clyde, but still reaches out across the water to the Isle of Arran. *Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 16-35mm lens, ISO 100, 123secs at f/22, tripod*

Opposite (top) **Katherine Fotheringham**
Taken from a hillside opposite the Cuillin on the Isle of Skye as the sun set behind the hills. I quickly set up my camera and managed to take a few photos before the showers moved on and the light was gone. *Nikon D750 with 17-55mm, ISO 125, 22mm, 1/8sec at f/10, tripod*

Opposite (below) **Alan Thomson**
Low tide on the beach at Horgabost on the west coast of Harris, one of my favourite locations. Taken on an April morning as I tried to catch the spring sunlight on the sand and background hills.
Canon EOS 40D with 10-20mm lens, ISO 200, 1/80sec at f/8, tripod



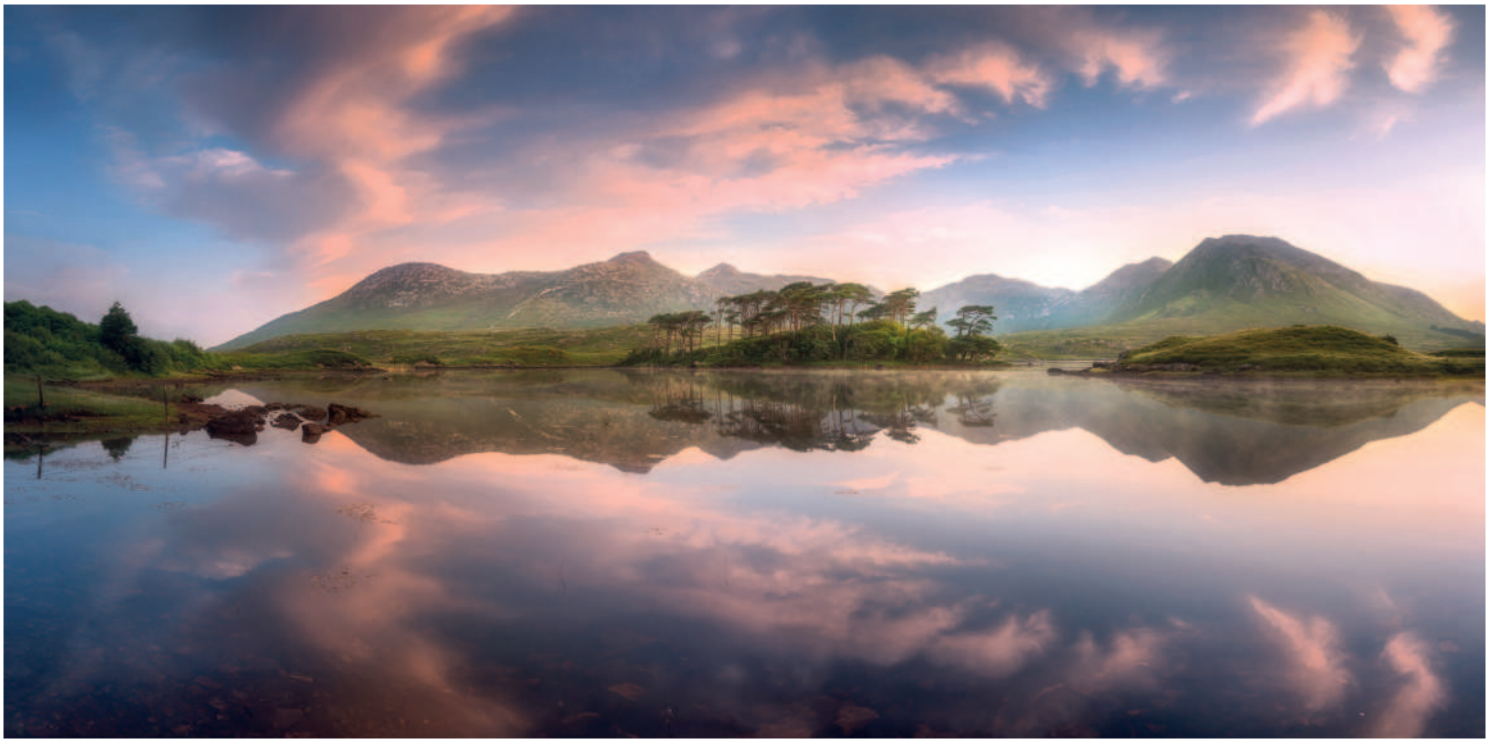


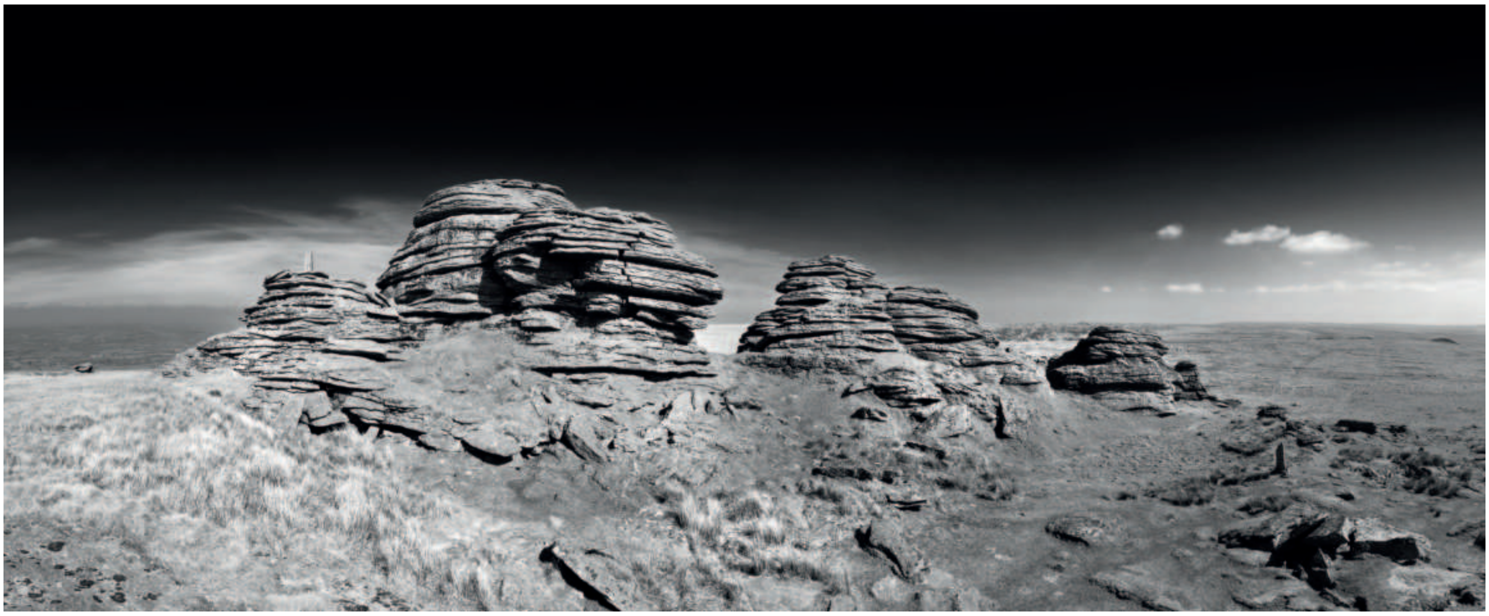
Above **Mitchell Pearce**
Lone trees in Nottingham. I managed just one shot as the sunlight shone through a gap in the clouds. *Canon EOS 7D with 24mm lens, ISO 100, 1/250sec at f/8*

Below **Pawel Zygmunt**
It's hard not to stop here when driving through Connemara National Park, western Ireland. It's also hard to get ideal weather conditions. The presence of mountains and the closeness of the ocean make the weather hard to predict. I have been trying to photograph this place for years, failing many times; this time fortune was on my side. Sunrise was bit delayed by a bank of clouds on the horizon, but as I walked around the lake the colours started appearing in the sky. I decided to photograph the big vista, so set my camera vertically and took five shots which I merged later into a panorama. *Nikon D810 with 24-70mm lens, ISO 64, 1/8sec at f/18, tripod, five shots stitched*
breakinglightpictures.com

Opposite (top) **Alan Novelli**
This is the Erg Chebbi desert on the edge of the Sahara in Morocco. I had sat among the sand dunes for over an hour watching the landscape transform as the sun became lower in the sky and the shadows of the dunes grew longer. A clear sky meant there was no hurry, and I tripped the shutter when the textures were at their finest. *Fujifilm XT-2 with 18-135mm lens, ISO 200, 1/300sec at f/8, tripod*
alannovelli.co.uk

Opposite (below) **Wendy Reed**
This was taken while walking the Kerry Way through the outer regions of Killarney National Park in Ireland. I was attracted to the dramatic sky, the silver light between showers and the track winding its way into the distance. If you like wide open spaces, south-west Ireland certainly fits the bill. *Canon EOS 6D with 24-105mm lens, ISO 100, 1/50sec at f/9*
wendyreedphotography.co.uk





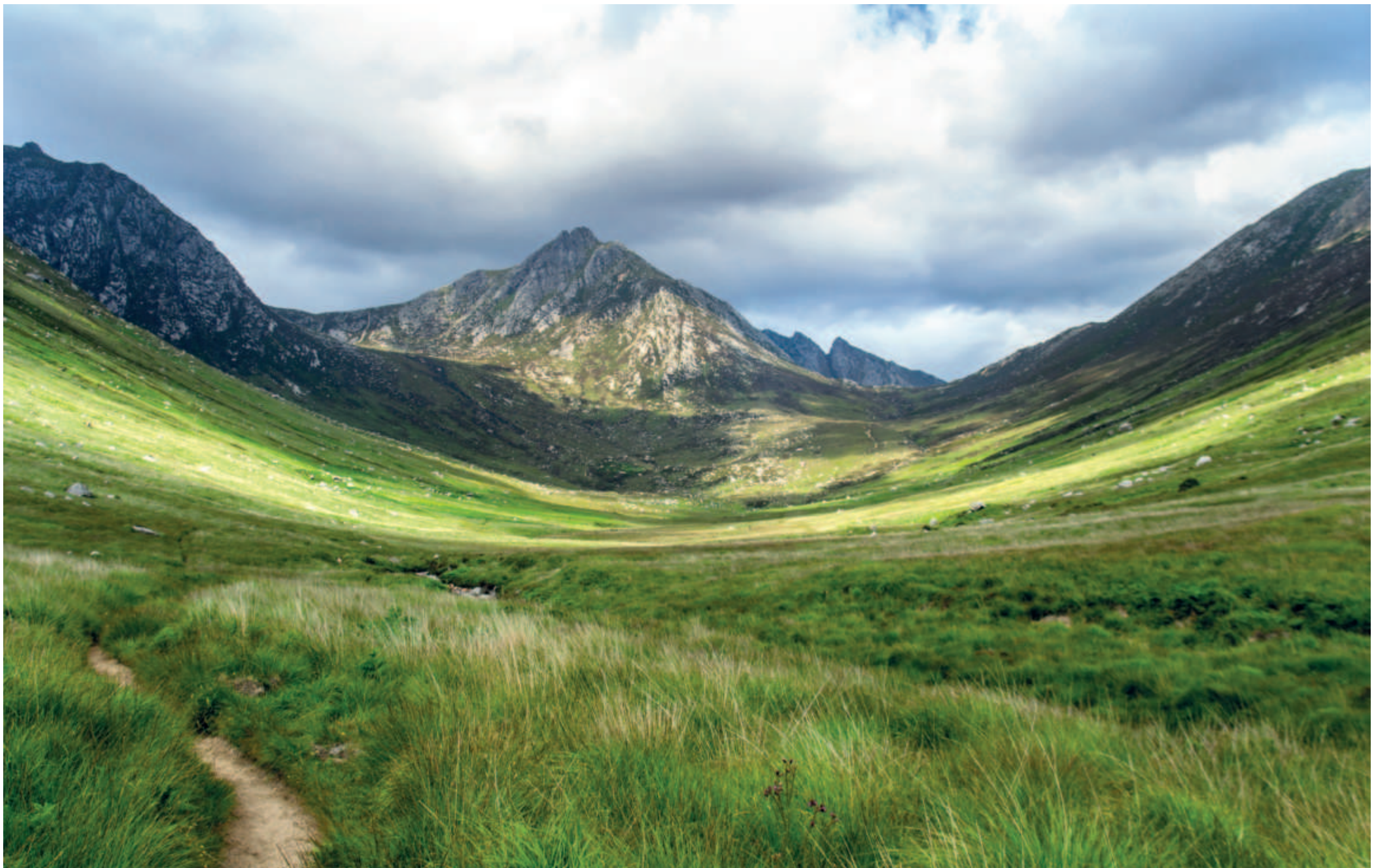
Above **Josephine Collingwood**
Great Links Tor, Dartmoor. This is my favourite tor on Dartmoor; majestic and broad, it dominates the skyline of the western moors. This is a stitched panorama which aims to illustrate the drama of the tor compared to the theatre of peaty moorland.
Nikon D810 with 24-70mm lens, ISO 100, 1/400sec at f/14, tripod
collingwoodphotography.co.uk

Below **Martin Rooimans**
Made during a walk in Glen Rosa on the Isle of Arran, Scotland.
Pentax K5 with 17-70mm lens, ISO 200, 1/125sec at f/7.1

Opposite (top) **Ron Parnell**
On my home turf in the Shropshire Hills, an early rise is often rewarded with an atmospheric sunrise. In the middle ground the first rays are picking out details on the local golf course, beyond lie the Lawley and the Wrekin, bathed in the early pastel light.
Canon EOS 7D MkII with 24-105mm lens, ISO 400, 1/125sec at f/10, tripod

Opposite (middle) **Julia Martin**
Dolomite sunset, Italy. I took this on a return hike from Tre Cime after the sun had set. Even though it was getting dark, I was compelled to capture the scene. It shows views from the southern side of Tre Cime to Lago Misurina in the middle distance, Cortina D'Ampezz with Monte Cristallo on the skyline. It was immensely peaceful.
Canon EOS 5D MkIV with 24-70mm lens, ISO 160, 1/10sec at f/5.6, tripod

Opposite (below) **Adrian Squirrell**
Pitstone Hill, Buckinghamshire. When I arrived, a wonderfully dark cloud was forming, and as I set up I was engulfed in the most sublime and eerie orange light. Then the heavens opened and I sat capturing images until the storm passed.
Fujifilm GFX 50R with 23mm lens, ISO 2000, 1/250sec at f/11, handheld, three images stitched
adriansquirrellphotography.com



Top **Richard Burdon**
Situated 40 miles west of the Outer Hebrides, St Kilda is a difficult place to get to, but I have camped on the island for a couple of nights. On my first morning I hiked out to the far western corner of the island and looked back towards Village Bay. I loved the warm morning light on the hills, so I took a three-frame-stitch to capture the whole vista of the island.
Nikon D800 with 24-70mm lens, ISO 100, 1/60sec at f/11, tripod, three shots stitched
rjbphotographic.co.uk

Below **Catherine Illsley**
This image shows the path to the hamlet of Burgstein on a plateau above the Oetz Valley in Austria and the view to the mountains on the other side. The track up to the plateau was a steep climb, but well worth the effort for the spectacular views. Being up high also enables you to gain a much better impression of the sheer scale of the landscape.
Canon EOS 5D Mk IV with 14-70 mm lens, ISO 200, 1/160sec at f/10, panoramic image of four stitched images
cillsleyphotography.com

Opposite (top) **Carole Nicholson**
Lodgepole pines in winter. The trees, dead due to the sulphurous geothermals, seem brought to life by the raking patterns created by the low light.
Panasonic DMC-FZ100, ISO 125, 1/1000sec at f/5.6
cpn.photography.com

Opposite (middle) **Steve M Smith**
Loch A'an, Scottish Highlands. The first time my wife and I followed this route, we skied across the middle of the loch. It was early March. On this trip, in late May, the scene was transformed.
Sony A7 II with 35mm lens, ISO 100, 1/90sec at f/13, six shots stitched
svp1.uk

Opposite (below) **David Travis**
The pandemic encouraged me to take retirement a few years earlier than I'd planned. One of the many positives is that I'm now walking more regularly. I took this towards the end of a seven-mile hike. This scene, from a place called Lead Hill, made me get the camera out for one more shot as it's a view of Ladybower Reservoir that I've not seen from anywhere else in the Peak District. What looks like an island in the middle is Crook Hill.
Olympus EM-1 MkII with 8-18mm lens, 1/400sec at f/6.3, ISO 200, 11 images merged in Lightroom
davidtravisphotography.com

Your next challenge

ENTER ONLINE NOW!

Autumn Shades

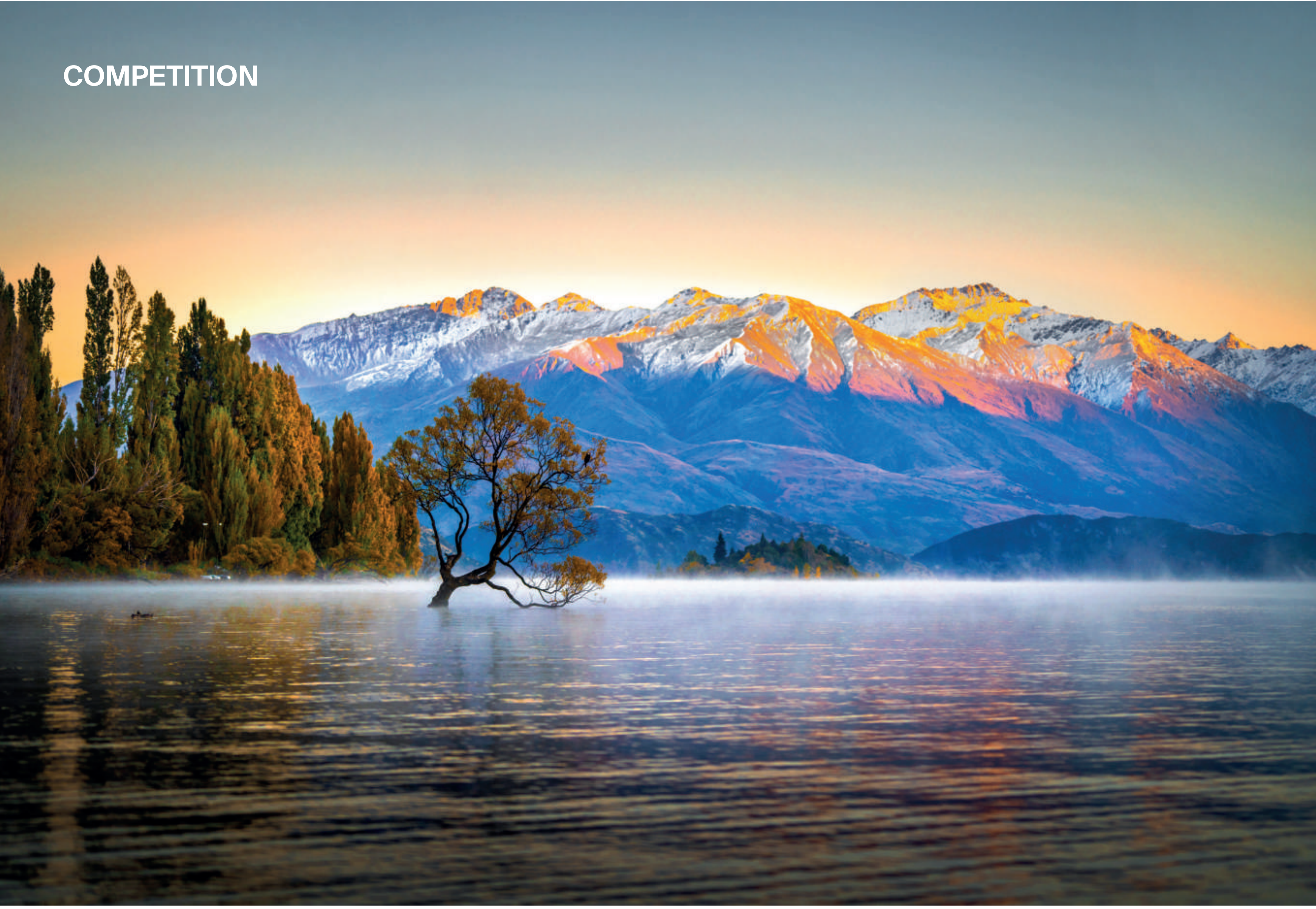
This month we are asking you to send us your best pictures taken in the autumn, arguably the most photographically rich time of year. We're looking for images that capture wonderful colours, textures and details in the landscape. The winner and runners-up will be published in OP 276. To enter your images, go to outdoorphotographymagazine.co.uk/submissions. The closing date for entries is midnight on 12 November 2021.

See page 70 for more details and terms and conditions.

Enter and you could win a pair of Hanwag Cliffside GTX shoes, worth £160!

Combining a leather upper with a Gore-Tex lining, Hanwag's Cliffside GTX is equally at home in the city and the countryside. The low-cut upper combines oiled and waxed split leather with Perwanger suede, while the lining keeps feet dry and comfortable. Lightweight, sporty and waterproof, this leisure and travel shoe is designed for maximum wear and climate comfort. Available in men's and women's versions.

Find out more at hanwag.com



Where in the world?

If you can tell us the name of this incredible lakeside scene you could win a pair of Komperdell Trekmaster Powerlock walking poles, worth £70

ENTER ONLINE NOW!

Surrounded by mountains rising to over 2,000m, this picturesque lake sits in a glacier-worn valley; it is a dramatic viewpoint that has always been popular with photographers.

But is it:

a: Llyn Padarn, Wales

b: Lake Wānaka, New Zealand

c: Queens Lake, Australia

The answer and the winner's name will be revealed in OP 276.

You can enter the competition online at outdoorphotographymagazine.co.uk, using Laketree273 as the competition code. Deadline for entry is 19 November 2021.

THIS MONTH'S GREAT PRIZE

Worth £70

Komperdell Trekmaster Powerlock trekking poles

The winner of this month's competition will receive a pair of Komperdell's excellent new Trekmaster Powerlock trekking poles (featured on page 83). These robust poles are made from strong but lightweight aluminium, weighing just 271g each. Comprising three sections, they are adjustable in height from 105-140cm, and closing to 64cm. A Tour 170 rubber grip ensures comfort on the move, while a tungsten-carbide flexible tip provides increased durability when hiking across uneven ground. Made in Austria, they include a three-year warranty.

For more details, visit komperdell.com

OP 270 WINNER

In issue 270 we asked you to identify the iconic bridge in the image below.

The correct answer is:

c) Bixby Creek Bridge, California

Shutterstock.com

Congratulations to our winner!

Peter Hyde from East Morecambe

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Erik Chmil
WhiteWall Ambassador

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